Corporate Strategy and Program Framework 2005–2010

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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE
Ottawa, Canada

IDRC ✳ CRDI

Canada

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is one of the world's leading institutions in the generation and application of new knowledge to meet the challenges of international development. For more than 30 years, IDRC has worked in close collaboration with researchers from the developing world in their search for the means to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CORPORATE STRATEGY 2005–2010

Introduction

1   IDRC's Corporate Strategy and Program Framework 2005–2010 is the Centre's strategic plan. The Corporate Strategy (CS) component is divided into two parts. The first is a situation analysis that examines the environmental drivers underlying the Centre's work. The second part lays out the foundations for the Centre's work: its legislative mandate and purpose, its values and fundamental beliefs, its guiding principles, and its strategic objectives.

2   The Program Framework (PF) describes the overall program architecture for the next five years. This includes the main areas of research (Program Areas), the explorations under way and being planned, and the ways in which programming is expected to evolve in the coming years. The PF also addresses the major question of how the Centre will carry out its program of work. The details of the three Program Areas are presented in a set of prospectuses, one for each of the main research thrusts (Program Initiatives). These prospectuses include a detailed explanation of the Program Initiatives: their defining features (methodological, institutional, and topical), objectives, and key issues. As not all Program Initiatives come up for renewal at the same time, only three will accompany this Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CS+PF) to the November 2004 meeting of the Board of Governors.

3   The Operational Framework, or OF, (formerly the Operational Plan), a companion document to the Corporate Strategy and Program Framework, will be shared with the Board of Governors in March 2005. The Operational Framework will serve management's need to debate, choose, and articulate an organizational structure, an internal governance and accountability model, and key business processes best suited to supporting the achievement of the goals and objectives of the CS+PF. The OF will help align the Centre's resources with its needs.

4   The Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CS+PF) is based on a careful assessment of the international and domestic context for the Centre's work. This assessment began with the commissioning of 10 background papers by outside experts in both Canada and developing countries. These papers cover:

- knowledge networks,
- the changing world of development cooperation,
- the Canadian research environment,
- the Canadian foreign policy context,
- the research-development nexus, as well as
- regional issues in science, technology, research, and development.

5   The assessment also included:

- extensive formal consultations with experts, mostly from developing countries, during four regional meetings held in Cairo, Dakar, Hanoi, and Montevideo,
- consultations with IDRC's partners in the Canadian foreign policy community and the Canadian research community,

- ongoing discussions with project partners in the field and with other research donors, including through the International Forum of Research Donors,

- a series of face-to-face and electronic consultations with Centre staff, and

- meetings of the Board of Governors on both CS and PF issues.

6   Nine external reviews of Program Initiatives were conducted, and fed into the planning process, as were participatory mid-term evaluations for two other Program Initiatives. A number of strategic evaluations, most notably a comprehensive review of the influence of IDRC-supported research on public policy, rounded out the reflection.

Part 1
Continuity and Change in the Context for Development Research[1]

7   This part reviews the main external factors — or environmental drivers — considered by IDRC's Board, staff, and partners during this strategic planning process. For convenience, these can be divided into drivers related to the international development context and those related to the Canadian context. Inevitably, the two contexts are inter-related, and they are described separately purely for reasons of clarity.

The international development context

8   Despite apparently accelerating globalization, the world remains a highly unequal and fragmented place. The per capita income of the high-income countries is still more than 90 times higher than the per capita income of the least developed countries. Children in least developed countries are 17 times more likely to die before their fifth birthday and 35% less likely to finish primary school than their counterparts in the industrialized world. Globalization has undoubtedly brought benefits to many, including economic growth and widespread access to capital, information, technology, and goods and services on an unprecedented scale. But globalization is also partial; its benefits have been highly unequally shared, with the richer countries and regions and a select few developing countries getting the lion's share of the benefits. There is much evidence to suggest, however, that the interaction between the forces of globalization and domestic policy is important: those countries that have prospered are those that have managed globalization best. Globalization has also brought its problems, including financial instability, accelerated spread of epidemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS and SARS, global warming, and internationalized criminality of various sorts, including terrorism, international trafficking in humans, trade in narcotics and illegal weaponry, and associated money laundering.

9   While economic growth has resumed in most of the industrialized world in the last three years, the record in the developing countries is less uniform. Most of Asia has been growing rapidly, while Latin America has stagnated, and parts of Africa and other regions are actually shrinking. Globally, the proportion of people living under the poverty line of US$1 a day is falling, but opinions differ as to whether the actual number of people under the poverty line is falling as well. Even where GDP is growing quickly, the level of income poverty is falling at a much slower rate; in South Asia, for example, it takes 5-7% growth in

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[1] Data sources for this section: Shaohua Chen and Martin Ravallion, "How have the world's poorest fared since the early 1980s?" World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3341, June 2004; *The Economist* (London) 13 March 2004; *Financial Times* (London) 5 May 2004; InterAcademy Council, *Inventing a Better Future: A Strategy for Building Worldwide Capacities in Science and Technology*, IAC, Amsterdam, 2004; The Rt. Hon. Paul Martin, "Address by Prime Minister Paul Martin on the occasion of a luncheon hosted by the Laval Chamber of Commerce", PMO, Ottawa, 2004; PNUD, *La Democracia en América Latina: Hacia una Democracia de Ciudadanas y Ciudadanos*, UNDP, New York, 2004; UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003*, UNDP, New York, 2003; UNDP, *2004 Arab Human Development Report*, UNDP, New York, 2004; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Measuring and Monitoring the Information and Knowledge Societies: A Statistical Challenge*, UIS, Montréal, 2003; G. Westhom, B. Tchatchoua, and P. Tindemans, "Measuring progress towards knowledge societies," *A World of Science* (UNESCO), Vol. 2, No. 1, 2004; World Bank, *World Development Report 2004*, World Bank, Washington DC, 2004.

national income to reduce the proportion of people living under the poverty line by one percentage point. Income inequality remains stubbornly high, both between countries and within many countries, and evidence has begun to show that inequality is an important driver of conflict within countries. Nonmonetary measures of poverty and welfare give a more complex picture still.

10   Paralleling the global inequalities in wealth and welfare are equally large, or even larger, inequalities in knowledge, technology, research, and the general ability to apply these to the problems of development. The countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are home to 21% of the world's population but account for 58% of world income, 72% of Internet users, and 80% of world gross expenditures on research and development. In 2001, in most African countries less than 0.5% of the population used the Internet; in Latin America, the figure in most countries was between 3% and 10%; in the industrialized countries, between one-quarter and one-half of the population were Internet users. Adoption of new information and communication technologies is rising rapidly in the developing world, however.

11   The high-income industrialized countries spend between 1.5% and 3.8% of their national income on research and development (R&D). African countries spend on average only 0.3% of their much smaller income on R&D and the Arab states, only 0.2%. Developing countries on average spend 0.5% of their national income on R&D. The patterns of expenditure on R&D are replicated in other indicators of R&D capacity, such as the number of researchers, research centres, libraries, and laboratories, and the number and rate of research outputs, such as articles published in refereed journals and patents issued. Africa, for example, has 13% of the world's population but only 1.2% of its researchers. Gross annual expenditure per researcher (in purchasing power parity terms) ranges from US$191,000 in the OECD to $69,000 in Africa and $48,000 in the Arab states.

12   Within the developing world, R&D expenditure and research capacity are highly concentrated in a small number of countries. Indeed, intra-regional differences in R&D are as significant as inter-regional differences. Three-quarters of all African R&D expenditure takes place in South Africa, for example. In fact, the concentration of developing countries' R&D in a small number of countries (Brazil, China, India, South Africa) is so striking that many people are beginning to consider these countries to be a separate group altogether. The gross annual expenditure per researcher in the newly industrialized countries in Asia, for example, is $184,000 in purchasing power parity terms and in Brazil it is $190,000, only 4% and 0.5% lower than the OECD average respectively.

13   Paradoxically, the growing heterogeneity between the countries of "the South" may create opportunities for fruitful South–South cooperation, as less developed countries learn from the success of others. However, it may also drive the more high-capacity developing countries to look the other way and seek contacts only in the industrialized world.

14   The current fast pace of economic and social change throughout the world is associated with an even more fundamental and rapid change in technologies, especially information and communication technology, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. These new technologies and their benefits are unevenly spread throughout the world; the famous "digital divide" is mirrored in other scientific and technological divides. Though the new technologies bring with them many opportunities and benefits, they can have a

downside as well. The overall gap in research capacity between rich and poor nations is probably smaller than the gap in capacity related to these new technologies, especially biotechnology and nanotechnology. All countries are faced with hard policy choices with respect to genetically modified organisms, intellectual property rights and indigenous knowledge, trade in new technologies and their products, food safety, environmental protection, and other areas. But developing countries often have very little capacity to analyze these problems and deal with them on the basis of evidence. Building this capacity demands large investments from states that are already under pressure to spend money on other worthy projects, such as the promotion of the rights to primary education and health care. At the same time, donor and developing-country governments alike are increasingly aware of the possibilities that the new technologies offer for poverty reduction, employment, and sustainable and equitable development.

15   Patterns of economic growth, especially the prevalence of certain styles of production and consumption, combined with demographic change and inadequate environmental policy and management practices, aggravate the environmental challenges faced by people in developing countries. Complex, inter-related, and not amenable to top-down environmental management, these challenges manifest themselves at local, national, regional, and global levels. The impacts of human activity on fresh water, soils, forests, fisheries and oceans, as well as on other crucial resources and ecological processes, are evident at a global scale. The poor are most immediately vulnerable to the consequences: polluted and scarce water, lower crop yields, degraded ecosystems yielding less of the food and materials they depend on. While some of the interactions between the health of the ecosystem and human health are well understood, many others are not, and effective practices, technologies, policies, and laws to ensure the health of both humans and the ecosystem are only just beginning to emerge. Many of the appropriate responses to environmental problems must begin at the community level and be scaled up; these responses need to be supported at subnational, national, regional, or even global levels by laws, policies, and programs that enhance the quality and resilience of social and ecological systems.

16   At the level of global policy and governance, a broad consensus exists around the importance of achieving the goals of the main international conferences of this decade, namely the 2000 Millennium Summit (including the Millennium Development Goals), the 2002 Monterrey Summit on Financing for Development, and the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. There is broad — though not universal — agreement around the need for poverty reduction, sustainable development, the promotion of human rights, and a new partnership between rich and poor countries for development and global governance. There is consensus on the need for economic growth, especially growth that benefits the poor but that does not harm the environment.

17   There is much less consensus, however, on how to achieve these lofty goals. On other issues, such as international trade negotiations, the provision and financing of global public goods, intellectual property rights, global climate change, control of HIV/AIDS, and the reform of global governance structures, there is no consensus in sight. While much of the lack of consensus is based on differences in philosophical values, ideology, or interest, no small part of it is based on disagreements about the relevant facts, which in many cases are not known. The lack of consensus on how to achieve global development

goals, therefore, creates space for research to provide an evidential base for dialogue, negotiations, and decision-making. Even where differences are based on values or ideology, the discovery and public display of the factual evidence — and of the uncertainties surrounding existing knowledge — can help move the debate forward.

18   At the global level, important changes are occurring in the international system and how it works. The growth of international law as a source of legitimacy, even in hitherto purely domestic affairs, is a remarkable feature of the last two decades. Regional organizations have grown in number, scope, and stature. In most countries and regions there has been a tremendous growth in the number of civil society organizations of all types over the last 15 years. These civil society organizations range from the community-based organizations to the big international nongovernmental organizations, to religious organizations and movements, women's and youth groups, and advocacy and lobbying groups of all types. Many of these are networked with each other and with the state and the private sector. Coupled with this rapid growth in civil society organizations has been a worldwide drive to more decentralized modes of governance, more community participation, and more policy processes involving multiple stakeholders. These factors are so pervasive that many now argue that the state has lost its monopoly on public policy-making, even its monopoly on its traditional core responsibilities. Many of these dynamics and their implications for development policy and practice are poorly understood.

19   On the positive side, the rise — in both absolute and relative terms — of the private sector and civil society vis-à-vis the state has created tremendous opportunities. Wealth creation is no longer stigmatized as it once was. The genuinely creative energies of the private for-profit sector and of civil society organizations are less shackled by state (and other) controls than they were before. There is a growing realization that the state, the private sector, and the voluntary sector do have common ground, and can work fruitfully together in a number of areas, in ways previously thought to be unlikely or impossible. The private for-profit sector can act both as an engine of development and as a strategic partner to development cooperation agencies. Research is needed to better understand this emerging world, and to identify the public policy framework needed for private sector development and public–private partnerships.

20   But there is also a sense of considerable disquiet about the state of governance in the world. Formal electoral democracy is an enormous achievement, and its rapid spread throughout the world in the last two decades is to be applauded. There is, however, also a widespread feeling that democracies have under-performed. In Canada, for example, there is talk of a "democratic deficit." In Latin America, a recent report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has spoken eloquently of the need to move from "a democracy of voters to a democracy of citizens." Youth in many parts of the world are alienated from the formal political process. In many countries, newly democratized regimes have secured important improvements in civil and political rights, but have failed — relatively or absolutely — to guarantee economic, social, and cultural rights. The groups most likely to be excluded from participation in governance processes include the poor, women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, and those living in remote rural areas.

21   While states have liberalized and privatized in a number of fields where such measures were undoubtedly necessary, this withdrawal of the state has been poorly planned and

executed in too many circumstances, often with dire consequences for poor people. People are starting to talk of the "disorderly retreat of the state," and of the need for the state to assert a more positive role in ensuring the provision of basic services to ordinary citizens: education, health (including the control of epidemic diseases), water and sanitation, environmental protection, law and order, social protection, roads, and mail. As the recent UNDP report on Latin America asserts, the failure of the democratic state to ensure provision of such basic services to its citizens may undermine the legitimacy of the whole democratic project. Needless to say, when the state fails to ensure provision of basic services, the usual groups suffer most: the poor, women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, and those living in remote areas. Several cures for this ill have been proposed, including more public investment, a larger role for the private sector, public–private partnerships, decentralization, and community participation. The claims advanced on behalf of each of these cures outstrip the research to back them up.

22   Related to these failings of governance are a number of issues related to rural development. Urban areas continue to grow rapidly, and urban populations now outnumber rural populations in some countries and regions. Yet the health and development of cities continue to depend in large part on the vitality of rural communities and rural environments, which provide cities with food, fuel, water, and clean air, amongst other things. In many parts of the world, poverty remains predominantly rural; indeed, three-quarters of the people struggling to survive on less than US$1 per day live in rural areas. Rural areas, especially remote ones, pose particular challenges for service delivery; the level of provision of basic services is usually much lower in rural areas than in urban or peri-urban areas. Needless to say, the well-documented bias against rural areas in the allocation of R&D resources continues to be a major issue in most countries and regions.

23   Also on the downside, there is the corrosive influence of corruption and illegal activities worldwide. Corruption, criminality, and illegal networks and activities of all kinds steal developmental resources and undermine peace, order, and good government. Under nondemocratic regimes, the challenges of good governance and human rights are even greater still. In an unfortunately large number of countries, the failure of governance is such that violent conflict and insecurity reign, and undermine development. In some countries, armed conflict is *the* development issue. It hardly needs to be added that the potential for productive new relationships between the state, the private sector, and the voluntary sector are unlikely to be realized in situations of failed or failing governance.

24   Also on the negative side of the ledger is the continued existence of a litany of forms of discrimination, exclusion, and inequity that deprive people of their human rights and impede development. Discrimination and exclusion based on gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, age, religion, and caste still blight the world. These forms of discrimination and exclusion, and the power structures that support them, often overlap and inter-link with each other. Analyzing these overlaps and linkages and the ways to untangle them remains a core task for those interested in human rights and development. Development has a political dimension: it is not simply a technical matter.

25   The political and social environment sometimes places significant, unnecessary, and harmful constraints on researchers. The UNDP's *Arab Human Development Report*, for example, has documented the harmful effects of constrained knowledge systems and of impediments to female literacy and female participation in knowledge-intensive

activities. But the problem is far from being unique to the Arab world. In many parts of the world, the space for critical inquiry, especially but not solely critical social science research, is far too small. Often the cause is a repressive regime seeking to stifle or channel debate. But even where there is no outright repression by the state, the critical edge of research is often dulled by academic custom, traditional, disciplinary, and other boundaries, and self-censorship in the face of powerful and hostile interests. A particularly unfortunate tendency throughout the world is for male-dominated research establishments to discount gender-focused research. Fostering a more critical research environment without putting researchers at risk is a key challenge.

26   Failures in the political, economic, and social environments often both create and reflect weaknesses in the capacity of institutions to address developmental challenges. Academic institutions, civil society organizations, governments, and the private sector often lack the capacity to acquire, process, and apply knowledge sufficiently well to arrive at sustainable and equitable solutions to the problems they face. This is particularly true in the poorest countries, and in countries affected by protracted armed conflict. Institutional strengthening is needed, and needs to be accomplished locally. Also needed is a way to bridge very local, often community-based, interventions and institutions on the one hand, and national or global policy and practice on the other.

27   Notwithstanding the environment outlined above and the increased interest by most OECD bilateral donors and multilateral agencies in knowledge, science, and technology, the gap between supply and demand in developing countries remains enormous. The findings of the Commission on Health Research and Development illustrate this well: only 10% of the world's health research budget of US$50-60 billion is spent on diseases affecting 90% of the world's population, located principally in the South.

28   Bilateral donors from OECD countries, national governments of emerging economies, multilateral agencies, private foundations, and the private sector remain the prime funders of science and technology in developing countries. Although bilateral sources are often the most significant in dollar values, many programs remain tied to Northern domestic research interests. Largely US-based private foundations continue to be leading investors in innovation and knowledge for development, although their thematic and regional reach is often limited. The longest standing collaboration between research donors is support to research on agriculture and food security, including through the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research. More recently, partnerships have been established for health research and research on information and communication technologies (ICTs), including increasingly with the private sector. Foundations have placed a high priority on building capacity in the higher education sector in Africa. Networks on social sciences research continue to develop, although few include community or user participation. Despite the flourishing of developing-country interest and the proliferation of private sector and nongovernmental activity in the field of ICTs, the research sector remains underfunded by both foundations and bilateral donors, though with some exceptions.

29   In some developing nations such as India, China, Brazil, and South Africa, the line between development partners is blurring. The same is true in a handful of smaller emerging economies such as Chile and Thailand, which are realizing the importance of building domestic research capacities and training their young researchers. Some developing

countries will likely soon change from aid recipients to donors, creating opportunities for triangular and other innovative partnerships between South and North and within the South.

The Canadian environment

30   Despite the recent change in government, Canadian policy remains substantially unchanged in a large number of areas. The primary pre-occupation of Canadian foreign policy remains the relationship with our southern neighbour. Canada remains a committed globalist and multilateralist, a founding member of the UN, the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the OECD, the Bretton Woods Institutions and NATO, amongst other organizations. Canada remains committed to the promotion of peace, order, and good government both at home and abroad. That means a strong preference for the peaceful settlement of international disputes and the application of force only under limited and duly authorized circumstances, the promotion of the rule of (international) law, the promotion of human rights, a commitment to freer international trade and investment, a commitment to building a more just world including through development assistance, and an openness to immigration from other countries.

31   Nevertheless, several profound changes have recently occurred or are occurring in the Canadian context in recent years. Among these, the most relevant to IDRC is the public sector's renewed interest in research, science, and technology. Since 1997, federal public funding on R&D has increased by $13 billion. No less important have been significant changes in Canada's public research architecture, notably the creation of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the creation of the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, and the establishment of the Networks of Centres of Excellence. The public grant-making councils are beginning to transform themselves into knowledge management institutions, and there is growing interest in internationalizing Canadian research capacity beyond OECD countries. Commercialization of science and technology research is increasingly a priority, as part of the new government's commitment to building a 21st century economy. This increasing interest in the cultivation of knowledge-intensive industries is in line with trends in other donor and OECD countries. Still, Canadian researchers wishing to do development research and/or interdisciplinary research have no dedicated funding agency to turn to.

32   Many public policy challenges previously thought of as "domestic," such as criminality and security, governance of telecommunications, financial regulation, pollution, and epidemic diseases, are now recognized as being regional and even global. Such problems in Canada affect other countries, and vice versa. Hence, addressing such challenges in collaboration with other countries could prove mutually beneficial. Paralleling a trend seen in other OECD countries, most of the Canadian government's "domestic" departments and even provincial governments are now engaged in a range of international collaborations, often around themes that could loosely be referred to as global public goods: climate change, sustainable management of natural resources such as oceans and forests, financial stability, international standards for technology, international law, and security. Many of these activities have a research component. There is a strong feeling that the Canadian experience in many fields, such as federalism, environmental protection, human rights,

and social security, could be of value to developing countries. Equally, there is a growing realization that Canada has much to learn from the rest of the world.

33   The Canadian public sector has also taken a lead role in public sector reform. Public service, client-oriented services, providing value for money, and being able to show results for Canadians are parts of a new ethos of government. In its development assistance programs, the Government of Canada has embraced OECD guidelines and standards with respect to aid effectiveness. This has implied the application of results-based management to development assistance. Good governance, probity, and proper stewardship of resources are values that Canada promotes abroad, but also must foster at home.

34   The expectation that different departments must now work together in a whole-of-government approach is also part of the evolving public sector ethos. IDRC has been at the forefront of this movement, working with several government departments on initiatives such as the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas and the International Model Forest Network Secretariat. An important manifestation of this new whole-of-government approach is the International Policy Review, which was ongoing at the time of writing. Part of this review is the recognition that international policy, including development cooperation, requires fresh thinking on various fronts. The role of the private for-profit sector in development cooperation is one such example, as is the role that the Canadian government can play in promoting the emergence of a strong domestic private sector in developing countries.

35   Most encouraging is the continued commitment of recent Canadian governments to double Canada's international assistance budget by 2010, through 8% annual increases. This commitment has already benefited IDRC, as well as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). These steady increases have not only permitted the strengthening of existing development cooperation programs and the launch of some new ones, but have also provided a much more predictable budgetary and planning framework, which should improve the effectiveness of programming. This budgetary increase is in line with the practice of most other donors, who have also begun to increase their official development assistance budgets after almost a decade of decline in the 1990s. Linking the innovation and development assistance agendas, the Prime Minister has established a long-term commitment to devoting 5% of Canada's research and development resources to the needs of developing countries.

Implications for IDRC

36   The challenges outlined above are not simple. Discovering and implementing sustainable and equitable solutions will require knowledge-intensive processes. Research, knowledge production, knowledge sharing, and knowledge use are essential if the global community is to build a better future for humankind. The InterAcademy Council, a grouping of national science councils from both rich and poor countries, has argued forcefully in its recent report *Inventing a Better Future* that every country should have a minimum scientific research capacity to face today's development challenges. This capacity is needed to enable countries to innovate and grow, but also to be able to absorb and benefit from existing technologies. The InterAcademy Council argues in favour of both individual and institutional support to capacity building for science and technology, and for the benefits of networking scientists within and across countries, regions, and the

world. IDRC will continue to advocate for the building of scientific research capacity as an important building block for growth in developing countries.

37   The continuing gulf between rich and poor countries in terms of research resources, the continued importance of knowledge and ideas for the solution of stubborn development challenges, the necessity for having a domestic science and technology capacity in all societies, and the imperative for innovations in the ways that science is conducted and managed — all these suggest a key role for an international institution with the agility, the intellectual assets, and experience of an IDRC.

38   The peoples of developing countries must be able to control their own knowledge-based development. Therefore, strengthening capacity for research, independent policy analysis, and accessing knowledge are critical. Analytical capacity in developing countries must allow them to contribute as informed participants to major international debates such as those on international trade, climate change, reform of the global financial architecture, and changes to the global intellectual property rights regime. They must be able to deal directly with issues of direct domestic concern such as governance, economic policy, natural resource management, and social equity where, in the absence of indigenous capacity, the analysis by external actors may be all that is available and will carry undue weight. These considerations should influence IDRC's program choices.

39   The developmental challenges facing poor countries are complex and interlinked. For example, soil erosion is not just an issue for soil scientists and hydrologists, though they have an important role. It is also an economic question, a social question, a gender relations question, and a governance question. The complexities of the challenges demand that research must also be complex. Purely disciplinary solutions will only rarely suffice. Much more often, an interdisciplinary approach will be needed, which implies the participation of teams of researchers, each well grounded in their own discipline, but also open to collaboration with researchers from other traditions.

40   Since development challenges are different, or are at least experienced differently, in various regions, IDRC must ensure a balance between regional tailoring and ensuring a global coherence and synergy of its programs. IDRC will continue to use a matrix management approach to ensure that, within the three corporate Program Areas, programming initiatives respond appropriately to regional needs and circumstances. Africa will remain the priority region, in keeping with its particular challenges and Canada's commitment to the continent.

41   To reflect the diversity in the domain of research across different countries and institutions, the forms of support that are provided (the "modalities") are often important. IDRC must continue to be flexible in matching the types of support to each situation.

42   In countries where capacity to make and implement policy is weak, connections should be made as early as possible between researchers and the intended users or recipients of the research. As shown by IDRC's recent study on the policy influence of research that it has supported, this involvement of users increases the potential for the research to inform and influence policymakers. Other lessons from the study include the need for timeliness of research to fit into open policy windows, the need for researchers to package research findings differently for different target audiences, and the need to better understand

the policy-making environment, and the ways research might feed into policy in a given context.

43   Donors are increasingly interested in supporting the production of and access to knowledge. IDRC will continue to look for increased opportunities to work in partnership with like-minded and innovative donors, including the private sector, and to expand the availability of resources to developing-country research. IDRC will continue to participate in discussions in the donor community, including through the International Forum of Research Donors and in developing countries, about how to do so. Within the limits of its resources, IDRC will also do what it can to ensure that research communities benefit from the potential advantages of ICTs, and encourage others to provide support to this vital area.

44   An analysis of what other donors are supporting has shown that much remains unchanged in recent years. IDRC remains one of the few agencies in the world, in the words of a recent World Bank survey, to take its lead from foreign researchers. The Centre is perhaps unique in putting development research grant-making at the core of its mandate. Other distinctive features include program delivery directly through Southern partners and across a broad geographic spread of developing countries, an arms-length relationship with government, and a strong commitment to working across the disciplines in applied and experimental ways.

45   IDRC has considerable freedom to try new approaches and to innovate in the field of development research. The Centre must continue to use the powers inherent in its *Act* to experiment and to show intellectual leadership. IDRC can also take the lead in following new lines of inquiry such as biotechnology, private sector development, ICT policy and governance, research and innovation systems, and telecentre support networks. In these areas, as in others, IDRC will seek partnerships with other donors while retaining its independence in programming.

46   The major foundations and multilateral and bilateral agencies remain strong partners of the Centre, particularly in the more mature programs. Ongoing work on food security and agriculture, health equity, higher education capacity building, access to information, and globalization continue to provide abundant opportunities to work in complementary and often collective ways. Increasingly, the private sector needs to be engaged, as do the emerging and potential donor nations of the South. This requires a new approach to both the ways in which development research is conceived and how it is supported.

47   It is clear from the preceding description that IDRC continues to work in an environment requiring a high tolerance of risk. The Centre must have an acute sense of what risks and opportunities it faces in trying to achieve the objectives of the CS+PF 2005–2010. The Centre must think clearly about what measures would help to mitigate any unwanted risks, be they internal to the Centre, within the Canadian environment, or abroad. IDRC will put a greater emphasis in the CS+PF 2005–2010 on understanding the Centre's corporate risk profile. At the corporate level, an integrated risk management strategy will build on core assets such as IDRC's field presence, highly skilled staff, and niche role in the Canadian foreign policy landscape, while strengthening systems to assess, monitor, support, and communicate those strengths.

Part 2
Mandate, Principles, and Strategic Goals

Foundations and principles

48   IDRC will support technical and social innovations that contribute to the betterment of the social, economic, and environmental conditions of the poor, oppressed, and marginalized people in countries of the South.

49   The **IDRC Act** (1970) is the framework within which the Centre operates. The *Act* mandates the Centre "...*to initiate, encourage, support, and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical, and other knowledge to the economic and social advancement of those regions.....*"

50   In pursuit of this objective, IDRC has focused on encouraging and supporting developing-country researchers to conduct research in their own institutions. In so doing, it has helped the developing regions "...*to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills, and the institutions required to solve their problems.*" In persevering with this focus, the Centre will concentrate on building research capacity principally in terms of improving individual researchers' opportunities to undertake research and the methodologies they use to do it. When appropriate and feasible, the Centre will devolve the responsibility for program coordination, administration, and management to institutions in the South.

51   The *Act* also empowers the Centre "*to enlist the talents of natural and social scientists of Canada and other countries; to encourage generally the coordination of international research; and to foster cooperation in research on development problems between the developed and developing regions for their mutual benefit.*" The Centre will pursue opportunities as appropriate to effectively implement its programming in these areas.

52   The **mission** of IDRC remains "Empowerment through Knowledge," i.e. to promote interaction, and foster a spirit of cooperation and mutual learning within and among social groups, nations, and societies through the creation, and adaptation of the knowledge that the people of developing countries judge to be of greatest relevance to their own prosperity, security, and equity.

53   IDRC will retain the principles of **sustainable and equitable development** and **poverty reduction** as the foundations for its programming.

54   Sustainable development allows humanity to progressively meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

55   Equitable development implies that economic growth benefits the poor and that inequities are progressively removed. These inequities can cut along many dimensions (gender, ethnicity, rural/urban residence, socioeconomic class, religion, caste, age), and frequently overlap and reinforce each other.

56   Since poverty is multidimensional, poverty reduction must address economic, social, political, environmental, and cultural factors. The reduction of multidimensional poverty implies that people gain greater control over the own lives.

57   IDRC recognizes that the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights constitute an integral part of sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction. By progressively gaining control over their economic, social, and political lives, people work toward realizing their **human rights**: civil, political, economic, social, and cultural.

58   Pluralism, diversity, and good governance are key to realizing sustainable and equitable development, poverty reduction, and human rights. Sustainable and equitable development, poverty reduction, and the realization of human rights all require improved access to knowledge and an increased local capability to generate, interpret, and apply knowledge. The expansion of local capability to generate, interpret, and apply knowledge contributes to the creation of a facilitating and enabling environment for economic growth, social progress, and greater human freedom. Indeed, the relationship between development, human rights, and knowledge is mutually reinforcing. Research and the dissemination of knowledge can be undertaken most effectively under conditions of intellectual liberty and unrestricted communication. In determining how and where to direct its support for research, the Centre will respond to the priorities expressed by researchers and the policy community in developing countries who share the commitment to sustainable and equitable development, poverty reduction, and human rights.

59   Research that is blind to the various forms of social inequity such as **gender discrimination** can reinforce inequity and inequality. The relevance of knowledge generated by research and the effectiveness of its application require that political, social, and economic inequity are integral parts of the analysis. Research must take into account the differential impact that change will have on the lives of women and men, on poor and nonpoor, on young and old, on rural and urban or peri-urban dwellers. If it fails to do so, crucial questions of social and economic equity will be distorted or ignored. While gender analysis and social analysis are crosscutting in research for development, research focused on gender and social inequities can also seek to eliminate inequity and inequality.

60   The Corporate Strategy and Program Framework are intended to provide general guidance and boundaries for the work of the Centre. Given the heterogeneity of conditions in "the South" — political, social, cultural, research, economic, technological — IDRC must rely heavily on country- and region-specific consultations and the **discretion and creative judgement of staff** for specific program choices.

61   Supporting research, especially in the context of weak infrastructure and in circumstances where the prospects for the uptake and effective use of knowledge are uncertain, is inherently a risky business. However, safe environments are rarely where the greatest needs are found. Using evidence sensitive to the contexts and perspectives of the South, IDRC will take **risks** knowingly and adapt to local settings.

62   IDRC must preserve the intellectual and administrative **flexibility to experiment** with new approaches to problem-oriented, multidisciplinary, participatory research. Where appropriate IDRC will **demonstrate leadership** in the research for development community and **be forward-looking** in program choices and approaches.

63   As the *IDRC Act* makes clear, the Centre is concerned with research **for development**, i.e. the research is intended to contribute to improving the lives of people in developing countries. Therefore, as well as making the needs and aspirations of the people of

the South the starting point of its work, IDRC will strive for sustainable interventions by making every effort to ensure that the results of the research that it supports influence policies, practices, and technologies that bear on the lives of those same people.

64 Underlying all of its work, the Centre will strive for **excellence** in research and will support the efforts of others in this respect. Whether helping to build research capacity or to produce results that will inform public policy and practice, IDRC will expect the work that it supports to be methodologically sound and scientifically valid.

65 The knowledge and technologies that are developed with IDRC support should be readily available to all those in developing countries who can benefit from them. Wherever it is consistent with this principle, recipient institutions should own the intellectual property rights that arise in the work they produce and profit freely from it. They should always be formally acknowledged as the creators of the work.

Strategic goals

66 IDRC will strengthen and help to mobilize the local research capacity of developing countries, especially in the program areas of Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM), Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), and Social and Economic Policy (SEP).

67 IDRC will foster and support the production, dissemination, and application of research results that lead to changed practices, technologies, policies, and laws that promote sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction.

68 IDRC will leverage additional Canadian resources for research for development by creating, reinforcing, funding, and participating in partnerships between Canadian institutions and institutions in the developing world.

69 In pursuing these goals, IDRC will assess performance according to four main criteria, namely the extent to which the Centre contributes to:

- building a favourable environment within which research can be carried out and which provides opportunities for individual researchers in the South;
- supporting research that is credible, i.e. scientifically valid and methodologically sound;
- influencing practices, technologies, policies, and laws that contribute to sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction; and
- building explicitly Southern agendas into current international policy debates and developmental decision-making at all levels.

Program Complements

Canadian partnerships

70   The Centre will continue to develop and maintain a range of partnerships with Canadians based on interinstitutional cooperation, collaborative research, and extensive networking around research and access to knowledge.

71   As the Canadian research community grows and evolves in the context of rapid technological change, increasing internationalization and global interdependence, IDRC's approach to Canadian partnerships will be driven by the research agenda of its Southern partners. As enabled by the *IDRC Act*, the Centre will *"...enlist the talents of natural and social scientists of Canada..."* and will seek to improve opportunities for Southern researchers to access the knowledge and perspectives of Canadian researchers. Equally, it will strive to increase the awareness of Canadian researchers of the contribution that Canadian science can make to addressing development problems and to the benefits to Canada from such collaboration.

72   The Centre will also engage a wide range of actors in civil society, both those directly concerned with international development and those global citizens concerned with the generation and open dissemination of knowledge.

Donor partnerships

73   The underlying principles of IDRC's approach to working with other donors are derived in part from the *IDRC Act*: *"...to encourage generally the coordination of international research..."*. The Centre's partnership work will be directed toward increasing the overall flow of resources for research by Southern institutions. IDRC will work with donor partners who share IDRC's view of the importance of developing the research capacity and responding to the research agenda of the developing countries. IDRC will continue to concentrate its partnership development resources on working with a small number of "core like-minded donors," as well as with "emerging and innovative donors." CIDA has been IDRC's leading partner in the donor community and this important partnership will continue. The Centre will work with private sector organizations that share its core values and principles.

Field presence

74   IDRC believes that it should not only be perceived as being sensitive to and knowledgeable about research conditions in the South, but it should also be physically present in the developing regions of the world. IDRC will ensure that its presence in the field leads to better strategic intelligence, program development and implementation, partnerships, and use of research results, as well as representation and relations with Canadian and other field-based institutions. The Centre will continue to be open to experimentation with different forms of field presence, particularly those consistent with the devolution of program management and administration to the South.

Communications

75   IDRC recognizes that applying research to improve the lives of poor people in the South depends on cooperative relationships between researchers, communities, decision-makers and policymakers throughout the research process. IDRC will direct resources to staff and research partners to develop and use a range of targeted communications tools and strategies so that the research we support can influence policies, practices, and technologies that contribute to sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction.

76   IDRC will communicate to the Canadian public the central importance of international research cooperation in an increasingly interdependent global economy and will inform it of the results achieved through the Centre's efforts.

Research information

77   IDRC is dedicated to facilitating timely access to relevant, accurate information for research purposes. The main clients are IDRC program recipients, IDRC staff, and the Canadian and international development research communities. The Centre will maintain a high level of expertise in and awareness of appropriate technologies and content in order to strengthen the research information resources of program recipients and their capacity to generate and share knowledge.

Learning, knowledge, monitoring, and evaluation

78   An institution that takes risks must also learn about what works (or not) and why (or why not). IDRC recognizes that evaluation makes an essential contribution to learning and acquiring knowledge about effective approaches to research for development. The Centre will approach evaluation as a tool for both learning and accountability. IDRC will use — and help develop — the best available monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure that it remains on track with respect to its plans and budgets. It will also maintain a critical perspective on the relevance of its plans, and propose changes to them as circumstances change. The Centre will direct efforts to strengthen the evaluation capacity of recipient institutions and individuals and of IDRC staff to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of research projects, programs, and processes, and internal governance and administrative procedures.

79   In an effort to remain a world-class knowledge-based institution, the Centre will engage in continuous learning on both program and operational issues, as well as on issues related to crosscutting functions like audit, evaluation, planning, and communications.

Stewardship, probity, and good corporate governance

80   In executing its program of work, the Centre will exercise probity and proper stewardship of the public resources that have been entrusted to it. Recognizing that an element of risk is inherent in all research work, the Centre will manage risk in a responsible, informed manner that balances the demands of probity and innovation. The Centre will continue to apply the best practice norms for the governance of Crown corporations. During the period 2005–2010, the Centre will implement an Operational Framework to align the Centre's resources to ensure an organizational structure, an internal governance and accountability model, and key business processes that are best suited to supporting the achievement of the goals and objectives of the CS+PF. In its internal operations, as in its programs, the Centre will strive for continuous improvement.

PROGRAM FRAMEWORK 2005–2010

I. Overview of IDRC Principles and How They Relate to Programming

1   The principles that characterize the Centre's work, described in the Corporate Strategy (CS) document, are typically manifested through the Centre's program-based activities. It is through the various Centre programs — that is, the interaction of ideas, people, and money with development research and policy institutions in Canada and around the world — that the Centre operationalizes its precepts.

a) Capacity building and sustained and continuous mentoring

2   During CS+PF 2005–2010, the Centre will continue to maintain a principal focus on capacity building in research for policy, and, associated with it, support for a wider space for critical thinking. These dimensions of the Centre's work continue to set it apart from many other development agencies. Time and again, in the formal consultations organized by the Centre to develop CS+PF 2005–2010 and in our regular contacts with partners, it is apparent that association with the Centre is valued for its sustained and continuous mentoring — that is, an intense, professionally engaged, supportive programming mode. In practice, this will also mean continued emphasis on working directly with developing-country nationals and institutions, bringing in — but not imposing — views from outside the Centre where appropriate, including South-South links. Relatively long-term supportive relationships will continue to be established, the precise nature of which will be situation-specific.

3   The balance between long-term relationships and engaging with new partners plays out in a number of ways. During each of the past five years, for example, approximately one-third of all Centre research projects have been with new institutions. These have accounted for a quarter of the dollar value of grants made in each of those years. The Centre's active research projects engage about 400 separate institutions, amounting to a portfolio of approximately $162 million. Of these, the top 40 institutions account for approximately $65 million of the total active portfolio. Repeat customers therefore dominate in numbers, and even more so in their access to the Centre's financial resources, while leaving room for new entrants.

b) Investing ahead of the curve

4   The several consultations held during the past year re-iterated that the Centre manages to successfully pursue two seemingly contradictory objectives — "investing ahead of the curve" while remaining a "listening organization." These are not inconsistent with the Centre's capacity-building mission. Nor is it the case that leading-edge ideas are transferred from the North to the South. Indeed, much of the Centre's work is the product of listening to visionary researchers and practitioners in developing countries.

5   In the early 1990s, the Centre identified environmental economics and natural resource valuation as an important opportunity in Southeast Asia. It is doubtful if the programming that followed would have been initiated if the Centre had been a purely responsive organization. Another example from that era is work in sub-Saharan Africa on the

liberalization of trade in services (at a time when the trade policy debate in the region centred on traditional goods, trade facilitation, and market access issues). More recently, the Centre's support for work in ecosystem approaches to human health was driven as much by the foresight of the Centre's professional staff as it was by a clearly expressed need from developing-country partners. The history of the Centre's involvement in information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D) is about investing in moving targets, ahead of the curve, to bring more efficient and lower-cost technologies within the reach of ultimate beneficiaries. When IDRC first entered this area of programming it was one of the few agencies involved with ICTs for development. With the subsequent advent of the G8 DotForce, the UN ICT Task Force, and the World Summits on the Information Society, we see the adoption of this approach by other organizations.

6   During CS+PF 2005–2010, the Centre's exploration of the biotechnology (and nanotechnology) field would be an example of (we believe) intelligent foresight. Another example will be the continued focus on community-based natural resource management techniques in countries or regions where more centralized or hierarchical techniques prevail.

c) Policy relevance

7   During CS+PF 2005–2010, the Centre will continue to place a value on linking research to policy formulation **and implementation**. The Centre's consultations, particularly in the regions, highlighted the need to focus more carefully on policy **implementation** rather than just policy **formulation**. This was brought out consistently through discussions on why existing policies, rules, and regulations are not enforced, how corruption undermines their intent, and why technocratic approaches to solving a problem will not work without a sound understanding of the institutional context within which they are applied.

8   As the Centre's extensive study on the influence of IDRC-supported research on public policy showed, the links between research and policy are complex, nuanced, and seldom linear. Policy changes occur at several levels ranging from supranational to very local. The results of this study will be published shortly, and a brief analysis is contained in the 2004 *Annual Report on Evaluation Findings*. Five types of relationships between "government need" and "research interests" are proposed:

- Policymakers know they need knowledge, are receptive to it, and its "supply" is readily available;
- The issue is on the public and policy agendas but the government does not know what to do (a "leadership gap" exists);
- The issue is clear but the government is not yet ready to act (typically due to a lack of resources);
- There is no government involvement but a strong research agenda (the "emerging issue"); and
- The public sector does not want to deal with this issue at the moment (on account of disinterest or hostility).

9   The implications of this focus on research–policy linkages will play out differently across the Centre's programs, but do highlight the need to better understand the environment within which researchers and policymakers function, how research and analysis is situated in the broader arena of governance and change, and the need to focus on outcomes

and processes well past the end of the formal project life. How this is achieved will vary but will everywhere be the result of a combination of imperatives (and support) built into projects, as well as Centre-wide initiatives through the work of the Evaluation Unit and Communications Division.

d) Scientific excellence

10   Policy relevance cannot come at the price of scientific excellence. Nor can capacity building be seen as an excuse to support work that is not credible. Indeed, these are all complementary. The emphasis on excellence will continue to be the mainstay of the Centre's support for research. In its various competitive grants mechanisms, this criterion will remain front and centre through a careful assessment of, for example, the methodological and data quality of research proposals. Support for travel to professional conferences and peer-reviewed publications will increase as the Centre moves to larger, more "complete" projects. The professional reputation of institutions and individuals will continue to play a leading role when IDRC programs select research partners. These sorts of criteria will, therefore, figure prominently in the external reviews of projects and programs that the Centre uses for decision-making, accountability, and learning purposes.

e) Social innovation

11   It should be understood that impacts, be they on policy or science, are occurring in subject areas where the primary data, the results, and their interpretation are highly charged, not just because of imperfect political processes, but also because of scientific uncertainty. The uncertainty itself is situation specific. Joseph Stiglitz (former World Bank Senior Vice President and Chief Economist) — writing in an albeit economistic mode — argues that "changes in technology, in laws and in norms may all exacerbate conflicts of interest, and, in doing so, may actually impair the overall efficiency of the economy" [*Daedalus*, Summer 2004]. The history of development is replete with examples of seeming scientific advances applied naively, inappropriately, or worse. A technical advance in one context may not be viewed as such in another. The implication for the Centre's work, then, is not to promote a given technology or methodology, but rather to create the platforms in developing countries where such research can be pursued **and the choices associated with its design and implementation** can be debated and made. This amounts to a continued focus on what has come to be known as social innovation, the blend of science and institutions that interacts and yields outcomes that vary across — and within — societies.

12   The Centre's "Crucible Group" project provides an illustration. Following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development — the "Earth Summit" — in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992, this initiative brought together scientists, opinion- and policy-makers and business executives from developed and developing countries to discuss issues around the conservation and enhancement of plant genetic resources. Given their vastly differing views on controversial topics, no attempt was made to arrive at consensus every time. Instead, discussion was based on rigorous and dispassionate background papers, and it clearly reflected the values and experiences of each of the participants. The result has been a series of recommendations, some unanimous others not, that have informed the debate on the subject the world over. They led to very practical — but varied — creation of new or changes to existing legislation on plant genetic resources and intellectual property rights in several developing countries.

f) Role of networks

13   The Centre has traditionally worked in a networked modality. That is, communities of institutions or individuals are linked together around a common theme or purpose. In CS+PF 2005–2010, this trend will accelerate for a number of reasons. This mode — when properly executed — is an efficient way to transmit knowledge across a wide range of groups or regions. Membership issues have to be sorted out early. In some instances, membership needs to be broad and inclusive in at least three dimensions — it must include policymakers, civil society, and the private sector. In others, a narrow focus, either by discipline or function, is more effective. In almost all cases, the size and profile of network members will evolve over time.

14   One of the Centre's important comparative advantages in this respect is in the creation of South–South and North–South–South networks that, at their best, are both inclusive and efficient. If achieved, then the multiple goals of capacity building, links to policy, and scientific excellence are more likely to be met. Networks often overcome stratification by size, research capacity, and influence, making network development an important complement to individual capacity building and institutional strengthening. (However, it should be noted that networks are sometimes guilty of weakening rather than strengthening institutions.)

15   A number of Centre programs have reached the level of internal cohesion where they are effectively networks or will be developed toward that goal during CS+PF 2005–2010. Finally, improvements in information and communication technologies (ICTs) make the creation and functioning of networks easier — so long as it is understood that ICTs are a necessary and not sufficient condition in this regard. Areas where networks are likely to emerge or strengthen during CS+PF 2005–2010 include:

- the "communities of practice" in ecosystem approaches to human health;
- the regional and thematic networks on trade policies;
- the "clusters of competence" in the Centre's ICT4D work in Asia;
- the consolidation of environmental economics programming in Southeast Asia, its links to similar networks in other regions, and its expansion to other regions;
- the medicinal plants networks in South Asia and in Eastern Africa;
- the water demand management forums in the MENA region;
- the Community Based Natural Resource Management Centres of Excellence in Southeast Asia;
- the network for gender, ICTs, and empowerment in Southern Africa;
- the Peace, Conflict, and Development Program Initiative's subgroup on transitional justice.

g) Regional specificity and context

16   The Centre's work will always be shaped by regional specificity and context. It is important here to distinguish between the structure of the Centre's programs and their content. Many Centre programs are global initiatives because of the universal nature of the development issues they tackle. The growth of urban and peri-urban agriculture; the need to control the production and consumption of tobacco; and the promotion and

facilitation of effective collaboration within the international community through the use of ICTs: these are issues that all developing countries, indeed all countries, face. But how they should be tackled in individual countries and the nature of the development research support in specific situations depend on a host of factors. A globally organized program would take this into account when designing an intervention in a particular country. Tobacco is an example: while the over-riding objective everywhere is its control, the strategy to support evidence-based policy interventions depends on, among other things, whether or not the country grows tobacco; whether it is a net exporter or importer; its demographic profile; the citizens' level of education; the nature of the health system; the country's income level; the policy (incentive and disincentive) structure vis-à-vis tobacco; and the nature of the country's legislative process and government. This tailored approach to programming might well seem obvious. However, it may be that the high marks the Centre receives (relative to other donors) for being responsive yet innovative is linked to the diligence with which programs connect with local realities.

h) Effectiveness and resilience

17   Finally, a key lesson from CSPF 2000–05 is the importance of program effectiveness and resilience. There are two main arguments to be made: one is that it simply costs too much to administer a multitude of small activities and the Centre ends up spending too much on itself relative to funding its clients (the *efficiency* argument); and two, that programs have to be a certain minimum size or critical mass to produce results of value (the *effectiveness* argument). Clearly there is a high degree of interdependence between the two. As some of the Centre's own research has shown (the Employee Climate Survey and the Workload Study), program staff who are engaged in too many activities and transactions, with inadequate time for reflection, feel that quality suffers and that the Centre's work is less effective.

18   Of the two qualities, effectiveness is the more important. In theory, the Centre could be highly efficient in the narrow sense of having more streamlined operations, less time and money spent on administrative tasks, and more program officer time devoted to fewer program activities. Networked projects, for example, can form natural environments for self-supporting learning and mentoring, making less demand on program staff time.

19   Efficiency is easier to achieve because it only deals with cost ratios and costs per unit of output, (e.g. $/project). Effectiveness takes quantity, quality, and value of output into account. To address effectiveness adequately, we would need data on outputs, outcomes, downstream impacts, and so on. This information is in short supply, not just in IDRC but also in every other institution that deals with research, either directly or indirectly, especially those dealing with public goods. The point is not to try to deal with the value of output, but to provide a reminder that it is a key element of the conceptual framework of the Centre's programming.

20   In practice, the argument for effective programming boils down to the following points:

- more "complete" projects that pay as much attention to the front end (project design, adequate budgets) and back end (dissemination, communication, networking) as they do to the middle (monitoring the progress of the project);

- more "complete" projects that build in support for (seemingly) "noncore" activities, such as institutional support, travel to professional meetings, and access to data and information;

- Centre-wide initiatives that build individual and institutional capacities in areas like communications, resource expansion, and financial administration;

- larger program teams that comprise the necessary skills sets to deal with the intellectual ambit of the program, and are resilient to the inevitable shocks that affect projects and staff; and

- greater emphasis on modalities such as fellowships and awards programs, and networked clusters of project efforts on related themes.

II. Making Choices

21   A number of considerations have gone into the proposed configuration of programs for the period 2005–2010. The extensive set of internal and external consultations, program evaluations, and Centre management's own assessment of and experience with programming during CSPF 2000–2005 have played a pre-eminent role. A primary outcome of this set of considerations has been the importance of balancing continuity in programming with change. The role of continuity, particularly in the development cooperation sector where agencies are frequently criticized for being driven by "fads," cannot be over-estimated. Capacity building, in particular, requires prolonged and dedicated attention if it is to be durable. Continuity is also important to attract and retain the high quality specialists who contribute to IDRC's reputation for professionalism.

22   A second set of considerations in making choices relates to resources, both human and financial. The Centre is on a modest growth path financially, with an increasing Parliamentary appropriation and buoyant resource expansion (see Section VI, below). But in real terms, the Centre's appropriation is still about 30% lower than at its peak in 1988/89, a fact mirrored in its staff complement. Moreover, the size and composition of the Centre's professional staff is relatively fixed, at least in the short term. It would be a mistake to consider these as hard constraints working against change. Rather, they point to the need to introduce measured change, in a manner that is compatible with trends in existing resources.

23   A third set of considerations has already been mentioned in Section I. In short, program choices will be guided by the extent to which research on a given issue or region can be replicated and/or scaled up, and will lead to developmental outcomes through the processes of policy formulation and implementation. An important factor internal to IDRC has been the need to develop program resilience. Finally, to preview the content of Section IV below, these program choices will be congruent with the priorities of Canada's development, innovation, and science and technology (S&T) agendas.

24   Together, these considerations have provided the guideposts by which program choices have been made.

25   During CS+PF 2005–2010, the Centre's programming will continue to be organized around three program areas — Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM), Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), and Social and Economic Policy (SEP) — operating in four developing regions (Africa; Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Middle East and North Africa). Important cross-cuts will be provided by Centre-wide as well as program-specific training and awards programs (sections IV and VII), links with the Canadian research, policy, and civil society sectors (section IV), and partnerships (section VI). The three program areas will provide the principal umbrellas covering the Centre's program priorities. During CS+PF 2005–2010, each will pursue nuanced shifts in focus from previously, move to a greater degree of consolidation in programs and their management, and lead to an even higher level of cross-program area collaboration.

26   In addition to the crosscutting dimensions just mentioned, programs will be developed or ramped up in the following areas: the developmental potential of the new technologies

6-1

(biotechnology and nanotechnology); knowledge systems in developing countries; gender justice; the role of the private sector in creating jobs, reducing poverty, and enhancing competitiveness; and (a return to) a more explicit treatment of education as a public good. (Sections III.iii, IV, and V deal with these topics and explorations more generally in greater depth.)

27   Inevitably, the range and reach of Centre programming, while extensive, leaves some topics relatively uncovered. Following a decision taken during the period of budget cuts in the early 1990s, energy issues are not treated in any systematic manner. Similarly, the nexus of issues around demographics, population, and remittances remains outside the reach of direct programming. In each case, the Centre does not have the specialized staff, or would have to reduce its financial allocation to another program, to do a credible job in these areas. This does not mean that no Centre support goes to these areas. For example, the Centre-supported Asian Development Research Forum has a subgroup on population and demographics, while parts of the Centre's ENRM and new technologies programming support work on efficient energy use.

28   While the Centre is aware of the highly debilitating role that corruption plays in subverting good policies, it has decided not to organize a dedicated program on the issue, but rather to seek to ensure that existing programs include an understanding of the role of the forces of corruption and the illegal economy. For example, the Centre's response to the change in government in Kenya in December 2002, and the Peace, Conflict, and Development PI have incorporated this dimension.

29   The working assumption of this document is that the Centre's Parliamentary appropriation will continue to increase modestly for the duration of CS+PF 2005–2010. A contingency must be made for a more pessimistic funding scenario, however. It would be neither possible nor appropriate in this document to identify exactly how programs would adjust to a reduction in funding. The process that would be followed would include two elements: a serious examination of how resource expansion from other sources might fill the gap; and the use of existing internal processes to arrive at the final decision. Concerning the latter, each October Centre management reviews programs and indicates which could absorb more funding, which are in steady state, and which might need to pause or reduce before proceeding further. (Internally, this has come to be called the "three arrows" exercise, as a blunt indication of the three possibilities.) This exercise, coupled with the current in-depth knowledge on each program that managers (principally the Directors of Program Areas, Regional Directors, VP-Programs, and President) possess, would serve well should decisions have to be taken in response to a change — an increase or decrease — in the budget.

30   If a final comment were to be made on the question of making choices, it is this: there is a strong trade-off between the extent and depth of the Centre's thematic and regional coverage. The risk of being spread too thin is at least as great as the risk of not being "in" on a certain topic or country. This does not mean that new directions should not be pursued — several are, as this document shows. Rather, it means that choices are made based on the Centre's ability to then pursue a credible, sustained, and effective program of support.

III. The Program Matrix

31   Although the five-year CS+PF process provides an important opportunity to reflect on the environment in, precepts on, and modalities through which the Centre operates, the "PF" is a rolling program frame, constantly adapting to changed circumstances, and whose individual programs extend from one CSPF period into the other. This document is a framework describing in very broad terms the shape of Centre programming and the main considerations that will determine it over the next five years. The prospectuses describe each PI thrust in greater detail. The annual program reports to the Board (which alternate between a thematic and geographic cut of the program matrix) provide regular accounts of the progress and developments in Centre programming while the Program of Work and Budget, presented for approval to Governors each March, contains descriptions of and financial allocations to all Centre programs.

32   The rest of this section and the next two provide the basis and parameters of IDRC's program matrix — that is, the three program areas, explorations, and crosscutting research — for the period 2005–2010.

i. Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM)

33   In 1972, the environment appeared for the first time on the world's agenda at the United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm. From there was born the notion of eco-development. Stockholm articulated the right of people to live "in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being." Then, in 1987, the Brundtland Report introduced the idea of sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

34   The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development — the "Earth Summit" — in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992, advanced the concept of sustainable development and specified the place of men and women in such development: "Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development." The Earth Summit provided a forum to address issues of both environment and development, and to highlight differences in perspective between the North and South. After the Summit, sustainable development took on a life of its own, forcing its way into the deliberations of bodies ranging from city councils to international organizations, including IDRC.

35   The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in August–September 2002, placed more emphasis on the interwoven complex links between environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable development, as well as on the need for its concrete implementation. The 1972 Stockholm Conference call for concrete action by the late Prime Minister of Sweden is today more than ever accurate and needed:

> *People are no longer satisfied only with declarations. They demand firm action and concrete results. They expect that the nations of the world, having identified a problem, will have the vitality to act.*
> — Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, Stockholm, 1972.

36   The work of the ENRM program area is centred on the profound challenges brought about by the complex links between human well-being and the processes of

globalization, development, and natural resource degradation. During CS+PF 2005–2010, the ENRM program area will continue to pursue this goal: ensuring that the concrete results that are generated at various scales through our support will help nations and stakeholders involved in sustainable development initiatives to act. This will be done with support for the generation of solutions to address complex problems, which, suitably modified, may be applied in other similar situations.

37   Work in this program area has been characterized by efforts to develop systematic research frameworks that engage multiple disciplines in the social and natural sciences and participatory field methods to more effectively engage stakeholders in problem identification and interventions. The gender and other social dimensions of access to a healthy environment and productive resources — and of participation in decision-making — are key concerns. ENRM has made important contributions to understanding these dimensions, but much remains to be done to ensure that a critical mass of skilled researchers exists in the South to build on this knowledge.

38   The program area supports work that is field-based: action and policy research that offers viable alternatives to or improves current environmental management practices and institutions. These provide practical approaches to enhancing food and water security, human health, the quality of natural resources, democratic participation, governance, and equity. Programs in this area operate in rural, peri-urban, and urban settings, taking into account the regional context and specificities.

39   Because it is clear that communities do not live and work in isolation, community-level work needs to inform and be integrated into the larger picture. A more conscious effort will be made during CS+PF 2005–2010 to support work that is (with suitable modifica-tions) replicable in other situations, scalable from a pilot phase to a development project phase, and that yields results with meaningful policy implications. A more explicit and systematic link between global dynamics and local environmental change (for example, links to urbanization, emerging and re-emerging diseases, and climate change), and the appropriate institutions to mediate these dynamics (at every level — local, regional, national, supranational) will be made.

40   Processes for engaging multiple stakeholders — a strong point of the ENRM work that is now clearly reaching the point of engaging more than community participation pro-cesses — will continue to be incorporated in research and analysis to directly improve people's lives. Care will be taken to demonstrate tangible outcomes.

Themes and Program Initiatives

41   In addition to changes at the management level already made, it is expected that a set of structural changes that consolidate programming in this program area will enable the Centre to achieve the goals described above.

a. Ecosystems and Human Health

42   The Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (EcoHealth) Program Initiative aims to understand the social and ecological context of human health and well-being. Despite some progress, environmental factors still dramatically affect the health of many people. Deteriorating environmental conditions are a major contributor to poor health

and a reduced quality of life. Overall, it is estimated that poor environmental quality is directly responsible for about 21% of all preventable ill-health, with diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections heading the list. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 3 million children die each year from environment-related causes and more than 1 million adults die of work-related illnesses or injuries. Between 80 and 90% of diarrhea cases are caused by environmental factors. In developing countries, between 2.0 and 3.5 billion people use fuels that give off smoke and other harmful substances. Globally, 7% of all deaths and diseases are due to inadequate access to or the use of unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene. Approximately 5% are attributable to air pollution.

43   At IDRC, the EcoHealth PI reflects many years of evolution in support for health research. In the early days, the research supported by the Centre was largely biomedical: vaccines, disease control strategies, and contraception. Later, IDRC began to take the environment and the community into account. In 1990, the program was called Health, Society, and Environment: although it involved specialists from different disciplines working together, it sought only to improve human health, not the environment. IDRC created the EcoHealth program in 1996. This program emerged at the crossroads of the development of practices in public health and in ecosystem health. It proposed bringing together scientists, decision-makers, and community members to work toward improving the community's health by improving the socioecological context in which people live.

44   Building on its past successes — notably in supporting scalable work and linking effectively with Canadian and international institutions and policy processes — this PI will pursue the work initiated during the last seven years, with a commitment to make the original framework more sustainable and fully institutionalized over the course of the next CS+PF. This was suggested by the participants in the International Forum on Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health held in Montréal, in May 2003. The PI will provide stronger support for the development of a "community of practice" that met for the first time during the Forum (350 participants from 42 countries).

b. Urban Poverty and Environment*

45   About half of the world's population (47%) now lives in urban areas, compared to little more than 33% in 1972. The concentration of people, their consumption patterns, and their economic activities affect the environment through resource consumption and waste discharge.

46   Growing food in and around cities has become a major industry, vital to the well-being of millions of poor — and some not-so-poor — residents. It is estimated 15% of all the food consumed in urban areas is grown by urban farmers and that this percentage will double within 20 years. Some 800 million people are estimated to be involved in urban agriculture (UA) worldwide.

47   More urban actors are interested in and engaged in urban agriculture to ensure greater food security, reduce poverty, and achieve sustainable urbanization. Research indicates that children's nutritional status is better in poor, self-provisioning urban households than

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*Formerly Urban Agriculture and Environment

in those who do not engage in UA. Urban agriculture also provides significant incomes to those involved in market-oriented production. It also uses organic solid and liquid wastes effectively, discourages dumping and squatting on open urban land, and rehabilitates contaminated land and water bodies. The challenge is that most urban dwellers involved in UA are the poor who do not own the land they farm and who have little if any support. This leads them into insecure, unsafe, and environmentally degrading practices.

48   The Cities Feeding People PI (CFP) has built on a 20-year record of research on urban food systems. Initial projects focused on urban food security and nutrition, urban food distribution, and solid waste recycling. The second phase of the PI developed multicity projects, and regional and global networks. An architecture based on five linked pillars (research, training, information, result utilization, and evaluation) was developed. The Centre has developed a niche and a good reputation in this area. Programming in this domain will expand during CS+PF 2005–2010 to more explicitly include these urban environmental issues: waste management, water use, and the connections between urban food and environmental systems and poverty. The name change, to Urban Poverty and Environment (UPE), reflects a move to clearer program titles.

c. Rural Poverty and Environment

49   Rural poor (including coastal populations) depend directly for much of their livelihoods on a range of environmental services and natural resources. Three-quarters of the world's poorest people (the 1.1 billion living on less than US$1 a day) live in rural areas and depend partly on agriculture for their survival. Per capita food production in much of sub-Saharan Africa has been declining for more than 30 years. Common pool resources (forests, uncultivated plants and wild foods, rangelands, fisheries) contribute US$5 billion a year to poor rural households in India, equivalent to 12% of total household income. The numbers in Western and Southern Africa are of a similar magnitude. As much as 35-40% of household "income" is derived from these sources in Zimbabwe, for instance. Worldwide, some 350 million people depend directly on forests for their survival. Global forest cover has declined by 46% since pre-agricultural times, however.

50   The unsustainable use of resources threatens the poor most immediately: 15% of the world's population depends on fish for protein needs, yet 75% of the world's fisheries are overfished or fished at their biological limit. Nearly 41% of the world's population lives in water-stressed river basins. In Africa, poor rural women and girls expend more than one-third of their daily food intake to fetch water, a task that, on average, takes up to three hours a day. Tropical forests are deforested at a rate of almost 1% annually: the net loss in global forest area during the 1990s was about 94 million ha (equivalent to 2.4% of total forest area). In the 1990s, almost 70% of deforested areas was cleared for agriculture. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) have been widely criticized for their lack of attention to the sustainable use of the environment and natural resources.

51   The Centre's focus on rural food and water security is increasingly emphasizing resource governance to reduce vulnerability, enhance assets, and legitimize the rights of all too essential natural resources. The Rural Poverty and Environment (RPE) PI will develop a coherent framework that will be applied in distinct focus areas — environmental governance, enhancing equitable access and use rights, strengthening communities' ability to benefit from globalization, and adaptive learning.

52   The RPE PI's work will increasingly focus on benefits to the rural poor from improved
      ecosystem productivity, and on adaptive local responses to external threats and
      opportunities. The PI will continue to promote participatory approaches to community-
      based ENRM as a precondition for sustainable rural development and will seek to ensure
      that development practitioners and researchers facilitate innovative local responses to
      environmental and developmental issues such as water management, resource degrada-
      tion and exclusion, and the impacts of global economic and environmental change. The
      PI will also contribute to policy implementation through focused interventions in key
      areas such as water governance. It will contribute to bridging the gap between improv-
      ing community-based resource management and policy-making by supporting programs
      and institutions that strengthen the institutional environment for policy implementation
      to enhance the resilience of the rural poor.

Secretariats and corporate projects

53   The ENRM program area hosts two secretariats, the International Model Forest Network
      Secretariat (IMFNS) and the Environmental Management Secretariat (EMS), as well as
      two corporate projects, the Mining Policy Research Initiative (MPRI) and the EcoPlata
      project (Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Uruguay, now administered by UNDP in
      Uruguay).

54   In CS+PF 2005–2010, the ENRM program area will continue to host the IMFNS, given the
      specific niche it fills and the support it receives from external partners. Model forests
      are strongly country- and stakeholder-driven. The model forest approach to sustain-
      able forest management provides a coherent and shared framework across this global
      network. Within this shared framework, however, substantive decisions on program prior-
      ities and directions are left to the discretion of stakeholder groups. For example, whereas
      model forest partnerships in Canada have focused on technical and awareness-building
      aspects of sustainability, in developing countries local partnerships have used this tool
      to promote different priorities linked more closely to development, such as governance,
      poverty alleviation, capacity building, and equity in decision-making. In almost all
      cases, model forests serve to promote the rights, interests, and well-being of Indigenous
      peoples.

55   EMS focuses on developing the international environmental agenda at local levels,
      facilitating regional networking, strengthening capacity building and research at the
      municipal level, and validating innovative multistakeholder partnerships to improve local
      governance. Closer collaboration with other PIs active in urban issues (EcoHealth and
      UPE) will be established.

56   Both corporate projects will be devolved shortly as they have reached a point of
      sustainability. The EcoPlata project is already administered by the UNDP in Uruguay,
      with significant support from national stakeholders in the country. In the case of MPRI, a
      devolution strategy is currently being formulated so as to ensure a successful pursuit of
      project activities by an appropriate institution in the Latin America region.

ii. Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)

57   IDRC has championed specialized programming relating to the use of information and networks in applied research since its inception. Indeed, the *IDRC Act* makes explicit reference to this: "*IDRC shall…establish, maintain and operate information and data centres and facilities for research and other activities*" [*IDRC Act,* 1970].

58   IDRC is both distinguished from other agencies and reputed for its longstanding programming in this sector. In the 1970s, this involved support to libraries and library sciences. Later, in the 1980s and early 1990s, it focused on databases and computer systems in libraries in the developing world. Although ICT programming began at IDRC in the mid-1990s, the absence of a unifying and strategic program framework created problems of coherence, integration, and strategic direction.

59   At the start of CSPF 2000–2005, a new program area — Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) — was established to build on IDRC's longstanding experience in this area. IDRC's subsequent leadership position in the G8 DotForce, the Global Knowledge Partnership, and the World Summit on the Information Society reflect IDRC's profile in this sector within the global development community.

60   In the recent media scan conducted by the Communications Division, ICT4D was the most frequently cited thematic area at IDRC. IDRC is known to both international and Canadian partners because of its ICT4D programming. One outcome has been the allocation of nearly $50 million in additional external resources via (principally): the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas, Connectivity Africa, and, more recently, Microsoft Corporation's Unlimited Potential Program support of the telecentre support network.

61   Globally, the ICT programming landscape is diverse. While other organizations have followed IDRC's lead in adopting ICT for development in their programming (most notably the UK Department for International Development and US Agency for International Development), many other public agencies have not, including in Canada. Despite the international emphasis on "digital divide" issues over the past four years, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has not embraced this sector. Other organizations, such as the UNDP, that have not had IDRC's success in attracting external partners and funding for this sector, have actually dropped ICTs as a primary thematic area.

62   What most differentiates IDRC in this sector is its support for **applied research**. Although some of the Centre's externally funded, newer initiatives include development programming, because they are located at IDRC they have a strong research and analysis component.

63   The programs comprising the ICT4D program area have yet to complete their first generation of programming and will come before the Board for review in March 2006. The process of external review will start in January 2005. These evaluations, along with the second World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis, November 2005), the Summit of the Americas (Buenos Aires, November 2005), and the UN Heads of Government Millennium Development Goals Summit (New York, September 2005) will add considerably to the strategic development of this program area.

64   The demand and need for leadership in applied research in the area of ICTs for Devel-
      opment remain strong. There are two pillars to the current CSPF in this area, *Access*
      and *Information Economy*. The consultations for CS+PF 2005–2010 indicated that IDRC
      partners expect the Centre to continue its leadership in these areas, with a special focus
      on how developing countries can benefit from and contribute to the new Information
      Economy.

a. From access to information economy

65   CSPF 2000-2005 indicates that the ICT4D program area will address issues of both access
      to ICT resources and assets, and participation of developing-world partners in the infor-
      mation econom*y*. Programming in CS+PF 2005–2010 will place greater focus on issues
      associated with the information economy, opportunities, and challenges. An exploration
      to deepen our understanding of some of the related issues is underway. It combines
      the work of several ICT4D programs and Social and Economic Policy's (SEP's) Trade,
      Employment, and Competitiveness Program Initiative. Greater resources will be focused
      on the role of women in the information economy in the next generation of ICT4D
      programming. Efforts in this regard have already begun within the Communities and
      the Information Society in Africa (Acacia) PI. As well, ICT4D will participate in the Centre-
      wide exploration on the role that entrepreneurship and the private sector play within the
      information economy in the developing world.

b. Regional context — global issues

66   While the Centre's ICT4D programming remains firmly rooted in Africa, Asia, and the
      Americas, it is also identifying and participating in global networks and processes. The
      Centre's participation in the DOTForce, the World Summit on the Information Society,
      the UN ICT Task Force, and the Global Knowledge Partnership — spearheaded by the
      ICT4D group — provides the program area and the Centre with a platform that assists
      our applied research partners. Some of the global issues that will be built upon in the
      next generation of programming include progressive pro-poor policy adoption, Internet
      governance, intellectual property rights, and open source as a value proposition with spe-
      cial relevance to the developing world. While ICT4D has always relied on strengthening
      networks of applied researchers, its Asian programming will build on recent approaches
      to support "clusters" of competence in Distance Learning Technology and the localization
      of digital tools. In Africa, a new approach to e-government is now being undertaken. The
      Bellanet secretariat represents another mechanism through which regional issues can
      migrate to global forums, creating larger value-added networks.

67   In CSPF 2000–2005, very few commitments had been made to programming in this
      domain in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This was principally due to
      a shortage of human and financial resources rather than to any systematic assessment
      of needs (or lack thereof) in that region. During CS+PF 2005–2010, ICT4D will expand its
      programming to include the MENA region through new programming capacity in the
      regional office in Cairo and in Ottawa.

c. Scaling up

68   As more organizations adopt ICT programming, opportunities increase for partnerships.
      When the ICT4D program area becomes involved in digital and Internet technologies, it

will do so more often through consortia and partnerships that help to create the critical mass needed to overcome major development impediments. While new technologies exist to overcome most of the longstanding problems of geography and climate, over-coming the principal cultural and institutional issues that block progress will require considerable applied research, planning, and partnership development of the sort that has recently been created in E-Link Americas (which will enhance partnerships for social development organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean), the work with the African University Broadband Coalition, and others. The recent Microsoft Corporation contribution to support a telecentre support network within the ICT4D program area is an excellent example and offers the opportunity to demonstrate the impact of larger-scale projects.

iii. Social and Economic Policy (SEP)

69   The past 10 years have seen rapid growth in parts of the developing world, led by the continued expansion of the Chinese and Indian economies. Fueled in particular by the growth of the Asian giants, acute poverty — at least as measured in income terms — fell from 28 to 21% of world population between 1990 and 2001. Yet absolute numbers of the acutely poor have declined much less rapidly, if at all. Progress in reducing the overall number of the very poor slowed during the 1990s compared to the previous decade, with some 1.1 billion people continuing to live on less than US $1 per day in 2001, the latest year for which figures are available. In many countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, the number of very poor continues to rise. The persistence of poverty alongside growth has led to renewed interest in what François Bourguignon of the World Bank has labeled the "poverty–growth–inequality triangle."

70   At the same time, our understanding of the phenomenon of poverty has deepened. Multi-dimensional analyses of poverty have highlighted the limits of simple income measures, while rights-based approaches like those pioneered by economist Amartya K. Sen have emphasized that it is the expansion of the capabilities and entitlements of poor women and men — not simply their levels of income and consumption — that is at the heart of the development *problématique*.

71   Assessed in these terms, the record is even more ambiguous. Nonincome measures of well-being — nutrition, access to education, maternal and child health, prevalence of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other major diseases — have improved much less steadily and evenly than income measures of poverty. Equally important, there are significant disparities — between men and women, across regions, and between the rich and poor — in progress in each of these areas. Meanwhile, secure civil and political rights and meaningful politi-cal enfranchisement continue to be denied to large numbers of the citizens of the South.

72   It is toward this complex of issues that IDRC's Social and Economic Policy (SEP) program area directs its attention. It focuses on enhancing the prospects for equitable devel-opment in its broadest sense, implying a simultaneous concern for economic growth, poverty reduction, political inclusion, and social justice.

73   Implicit in this approach is a concern for the institutions that mediate between develop-ment goals and development outcomes, and for issues of governance and the exercise of power at a variety of levels. Public policy remains critically important, but attention has

increasingly shifted from "one-size-fits-all" policy fixes to a more contextualized, politically nuanced analysis of policy-making and implementation.

74 SEP programs are thus united by a focus on public policies that can reduce poverty and enhance social equity. They aim to effect policy change in three ways: by strengthening long-term capacities to carry out, manage, and disseminate research; by supporting policy-relevant research and analysis on issues of immediate policy concern; and by assisting researchers and civil society organizations to facilitate public accountability by informing debates on key policy issues. They are concerned not simply with the design of policies, but also with the intricacies of policy implementation — and hence with the realities of institutions, governance, and power at the local, national, and international levels.

Themes and Program Initiatives

75 Over the next five years, SEP intends to focus its attention on the following four broad sets of issues, each of which represents a key challenge in promoting equitable development. Work will be centred on a limited set of global Program Initiatives operating across the regions of the developing world.

a. Peace, Conflict, and Development*

76 Violent conflict not only results in the massive loss of human lives and human dignity, it also undermines states' capacities to govern and citizens' abilities to enjoy rights and entitlements. Conflict also remains a critical brake on policies for social and economic development throughout much of the developing world, with negative impacts on growth, distribution, and government finances. In many countries, in fact, the complexities of today's wars mean that conflict is *the* development issue. Understanding the causes and consequences of violent conflict and rebuilding social, economic, and governance institutions in the wake of conflict is an urgent task, from Sri Lanka to Colombia to Sierra Leone.

77 IDRC's Peace, Conflict, and Development Program Initiative (formerly Peacebuilding and Reconstruction) has established a reputation as a leader in supporting research in this field, particularly in Central America, the Middle East, and Southern Africa. A key lesson from experience to date is that, regardless of the context, research for peacebuilding must occur in advance of the end of conflict and must continue well after the guns have fallen silent. Over the coming five years, the Centre will expand programming in Asia and Africa to establish a genuinely global program of work. It will also give more explicit attention to conflict prevention as well as postconflict reconstruction. While still focused in part on long-term programming in specific conflict and postconflict contexts, the PI will increasingly support comparative, cross-country analysis on issues such as the political economy of peacebuilding, transitional and restorative justice as a means of building the foundations of lasting peace, and the gendered consequences of conflict and peacebuilding.

b. Globalization, Growth, and Poverty

78 Long-term reductions in poverty and inequality depend on the growth of jobs and incomes for the poor — and hence on the ability of developing-country producers to compete in a globalized world economy. Yet the foundations of sustainable pro-poor

growth remain poorly understood and incompletely realized throughout much of the South. Growth is clearly important, but on its own there is no guarantee that rising exports or gross domestic product will translate into meaningful improvements in the well-being of the poor. IDRC has a strong record of achievement in poverty monitoring and analysis and in trade policy through the Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) and Trade, Employment, and Competitiveness (TEC) Program Initiatives. Over the next five years, SEP will build on this work, as well as on the experience of the Small and Medium Enterprise Policy project in Egypt and the Peru Social and Economic Research Consortium, to address this broad field of work. A new program initiative incorporating aspects of the work of both PIs will be developed for submission to the Board in 2005.

79 Particular attention will continue to be directed to the interactions between the rules and institutions of international trade and investment on the one hand, and domestic economic policies on the other hand. This includes attention to "behind the border" trade issues such as investment and competition policy, to the overall regulatory climate facing enterprises, to sectoral policies in key fields such as agriculture and services. It also means attention to safety nets and other social policy initiatives, which are crucial to managing the dislocations associated with a volatile international economy. Increased efforts will be made to assess and document the impacts of policy choices on distribution and poverty, building on the tools, approaches, and research networks developed through MIMAP and its "Poverty and Economic Policy" networks.

c. Governance, Equity, and Health*

80 The ability of states to guarantee equitable access to key social services to their citizens is a fundamental challenge for development across the South. The "disorderly retreat of the state" — as a participant in IDRC's regional consultations put it — has left a situation in which strategies to promote access to and financing of key public goods such as health, education, and social security are increasingly contested. At the same time, informed public dialogue and engagement in debates around health and other social services represent an opportunity to strengthen democratic institutions and practices themselves.

81 IDRC programming in this field will concentrate in the first instance on health and health-care services, building on the work of our Governance, Equity, and Health (GEH) Program Initiative. We will continue to focus on strategies to ensure equity of access, as well as on critical governance challenges in the design and implementation of health-related policies. At the same time, we will explore cross-sectoral analyses on issues of service delivery, such as decentralization and the role of public–private partnerships. Additional efforts will also be made to integrate economic analysis of strategies for financing of services, and the distributional impacts of policy choices, building on the experience of MIMAP in poverty measurement and analysis.

d. Women's Rights and Citizenship*

82 As in other program areas, a concern for gender issues and gender analysis cuts across all programming within SEP. This will continue in the coming five years, with dedicated efforts to integrate gender-specific research and gender analysis throughout the program

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* Titles may have changed since November 2004 or will change.

area. At the same time, we will launch a new program of support to work on issues of gender justice and citizenship, building on work initiated by IDRC's Gender Unit over the past two years. Plans for this new Program Initiative will be presented to the Board in 2005.

83   The concept of gender justice represents a fruitful way of approaching future research on gender issues and relations, and a new lens through which to view the challenge of strengthening citizenship and political participation. Work will focus in particular on understanding the legal and institutional impediments to women and men's exercise of their rights as citizens. Initial work is underway to define opportunities for IDRC research support, and to explore potential research issues such as decentralization, where the devolution of many state responsibilities to the local level raises a series of challenges — and potentially opportunities — for women's rights, entitlements, and political participation.

Secretariats

84   SEP will also continue to support a select number of multidonor-financed secretariats dealing with issues that cut across the themes outlined above. In comparison to the 2000–2005 period, only a limited number of such initiatives will be supported, and secretariats will be linked more closely to Program Initiatives to ensure greater coherence and cross-program learning.

85   Two secretariats are currently slated for funding. Funding will be renewed early in FY 2005/06 for Research on International Tobacco Control (RITC), which supports research and capacity building to address the critical health and development challenges associated with tobacco production and use in developing countries. While closely linked to GEH, its work program also touches on other aspects of the SEP program framework. Continued funding will also be provided to the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA), in collaboration with IDRC's Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM) program area. Efforts are underway to expand EEPSEA-like activities to other regions during the next few years, beginning with support to a companion network in South Asia.

IV. Canada in the World, the World in Canada

86   The environment for research and international activities is evolving rapidly in Canada, and will provide a variety of new opportunities for the Centre. The Canadian knowledge-based community has shown an increasing interest in contributing to and benefiting from international research in ways that explore the interconnectedness of North and South, and that address shared problems in a collegial manner where both partners contribute and benefit from collaboration. This builds on existing programming involving Canadians. The Centre will continue to support collaborative research for mutual benefit between Canadians and Southern partners across the range of the Centre's program areas, such as on poverty, health, ICTs, trade, agriculture, and environment. It will support the work of researchers interested in development studies and looking at global issues. It will assist civil society organizations working globally as they increasingly recognize the importance of knowledge creation and sharing in meeting their objectives, and it will offer young Canadian researchers, journalists, and interns an opportunity to become involved in development research, either by pursuing formal training or through hands-on experience.

87   The Centre expects that it will enhance the work and capacity of both Southern and Canadian researchers. We will also seek opportunities to promote, sustain, and expand linkages with Canadian institutions involved in international development, and looking at global issues that have an impact on developing countries and Canada. IDRC must be an active participant as Canadians review and expand their relationships with the world, and ensure that its experience and learning contribute to Canada's policies on international issues.

i. Canadian partnerships — universities, research institutions, and NGOs

88   The Centre will continue to develop its links to the Canadian constituency focusing on organizations and activities engaged in knowledge-led work for international cooperation. The goal is to assist with the creation of knowledge and practice that respond to the realization that Canada's own security and prosperity, in a just and peaceful world, are linked to ideas, knowledge, and innovation, which are increasingly generated around the world, including and especially in developing countries. Institutional links will include leading Canadian institutions, such as the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), relevant Canadian learned societies, universities, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

89   The Centre will also support a wide range of small research projects and knowledge-related activities undertaken by Canadian organizations concerned with international cooperation. Small grants projects and activities enable a wide range of Canadians to connect with the Centre. The mechanism encourages experimentation and new ideas, and is responsive to a variety of small endeavours that enable Canadians to explore their links with the international community. These small grants promote the Centre's knowledge-based perspective on development while being responsive to the inspiration and energy of Canadians.

ii. Participation in the internationalization of granting councils and government departments

90 The Centre has been involved in the lively debate in Canada on the "internationalization" of Canadian research and on the scope of international cooperation. There is renewed interest in Canadian universities and science and technology institutions for collaborating and sharing experiences with developing-country partners. Most recently, there has been a call for Canada's domestic research capacity to be more closely linked with the South, and the realization that government ministries are also involved in an increased range of activities with Southern partners. The Centre will encourage this interest and seek new directions for Canadian partnerships that can ensure mutual benefits for Canada and partners in the South. This will mean that the Centre must share the lessons learned from its nearly 35 years of experience in crafting and supporting equitable South–North and South–South knowledge partnerships through networking. It will expand its collaboration with institutions such as the Canadian Research Granting Councils and the National Research Council, as well as other mechanisms and institutions that have emerged as part of Canada's investment in its own innovative capacity, such as the Canada Research Chairs Program and the Canada Foundation for Innovation. The experience of the Global Health Research Initiative, combining resources from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Health Canada, and IDRC, is a recent illustration of one form such partnerships might take.

91 Canada's public service knowledge base and its research sector are increasingly playing an international role and are interested in linking their capacity more directly and frequently with that of countries and institutions in the developing world. The goal is to strengthen the capacity to undertake research and evidence-based policy-making. With its worldwide network of researchers and policymakers, IDRC represents an asset to Canada in reaching out to the world. Within the limits of its available resources and mandate, the Centre will endeavour to assist in this linkage.

iii. The emerging science, innovation, and development agenda

92 Innovation, both social and technical, lies at the heart of developmental and international cooperation activities. Canada is promoting a strong innovation- and skills-based domestic agenda and has declared its intention to increase its standing in the international tables that chart investment in science and technology. Over the last several years, it has re-invested substantially in domestic research capacity. In international terms, it presents itself as an important and open player in terms of innovation and knowledge-based development. It has been suggested that this should be a key dimension of Canadian foreign policy. In the South, IDRC has long been seen as a key research supporter and its activities have contributed to Canada's image as an innovative partner willing to share expertise and knowledge. It is increasingly understood that while the developing world faces enormous development challenges, its contribution is also key to solving global problems (many of which touch Canada). In other words, knowledge exchange and research cooperation are mutually beneficial. This will provide the context for IDRC activities with Canadian partners over the next five years and beyond. The work of Research on Knowledge Systems (RoKS) (see section V below) will contribute to achieving this aim.

V. Explorations

93 The Centre operates in a changing environment: research methodologies change; trends have to be sifted from fads; countries open; countries close; countries fall apart and re-build. Systems — political, economic, social, decision-making — evolve. Technology progresses. Budgets everywhere fluctuate. The drivers of the Centre's work are constantly changing, and, even if they are not, their relative strength does.

94 The challenge for the Centre's program framework is to provide stability while not discouraging flexibility. The broad program configuration previously described is up to this task, particularly because a degree of adaptation to changing circumstances is built into the programming system.

95 As a matter of routine, all programs keep up with developments in their field. During the past three years, about 13% of the program budget has been set aside to respond to opportunities that might lie outside the remit of individual programs (see section VII).

96 "Explorations" is the term the Centre uses to identify a process of program development or program consolidation. Since Centre programs cover a wide territory, it seldom happens that an exploration starts "afresh." Typically, Centre staff, management, or Governors identify an exploratory theme. The process that follows depends on the nature of the theme, but would have at least three common characteristics:

- First, it would seek to build on existing platforms within Centre programs;
- Second, it would comprise a program development phase. During this period, a set of regional consultations would be held, entry points and partners for Centre programming identified, and the program structure determined. On the latter, the principal decisions relate to staffing (team size and composition) and the program modality, that is, the choice between the status quo, a consolidated program, and distributing work on the theme among existing programs; and
- Third, the process of exploration would also include a measure of programming, so that program development is not "lost time."

97 At the start of CSPF 2000–2005, Governors identified two themes that were deemed explorations — Research on Knowledge Systems (RoKS) and Governance. After a period of about two years, the "Governance exploration" developed into the Governance, Equity, and Health (GEH) Program Initiative, presented to the Board of Governors in October 2002.

98 As for RoKS, Governors endorsed an exploration designed to examine "the ways in which knowledge is produced, communicated, and applied to development problems, and to investigate the policy and institutional frameworks that govern this process" [CSPF 2000–2005.] Thus was RoKS born. An update was presented to Governors in June 2003. RoKS is a crosscutting policy research effort in support of knowledge, science, and technology for capacity building in the South. This is being achieved by thematic annual grants competitions and partnerships with selected institutions, such as the NEPAD S&T secretariat, the African Technology Policy Studies network, and SciDev.Net. RoKS is also expanding its linkages with the foreign policy, development, and innovation agenda in Canada. RoKS is also playing a role in the biotechnology and other emerging technologies task force noted below.

99   About two years ago, it became evident that new technologies such as biotechnology and nanotechnology were likely to have profound impacts on almost every aspect of life in both developed and developing countries. These impacts are largely unknown and therefore controversial. The capability to assess them — much less deal with them — is low and exceptionally uneven in developing countries. Governors heard a presentation on this issue in March 2004, and will continue to receive updates on the work of the Centre's in-house Biotechnology Task Force.

100   At about the same time, it became clear that the work of the Centre's Gender Unit, which was crosscutting in nature and still somewhat focused on the gender mainstreaming function, would be rendered more effective if it pursued a dedicated program. As a result, the Gender Unit has staffed up, is receiving a larger amount of financial (granting) resources, and is working toward creating a PI whose working title is "Women's Rights and Citizenship."* Situated in the SEP program area, it is expected that a prospectus will be presented to Governors for approval in October 2005. Gender mainstreaming in programs will continue to be provided by gender specialists within the programs themselves, or by outside experts, rather than by the in-house Gender Unit.

101   Of a different nature, the ENRM program area will use the early part of CS+PF 2005–2010 to consolidate the long-standing work that the Centre has supported on the various dimensions of water, and to examine how best to continue to support work in this important development issue. A senior program staff member will steward this activity, which will include the work of several program units.

102   The private sector plays an important role in development, one that some researchers — and governments — often miss, or worse, denigrate, to their peril. As the Report authored by the UN Commission on the Private Sector and Development, headed by Prime Minister Paul Martin and former President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico, states "the private sector is already central to the lives of the poor and has the power to make those lives better."

103   Much work needs to be done to understand what policy and institutional environment would be favourable to enable private sector development to create jobs, and support increased social development and economic competitiveness. While the answers undoubtedly vary by sector and country, they must draw on and contribute to an increasing body of knowledge.

104   Drawing on the Biotechnology exploration model but with a shorter time span, a Centre-wide task force has been established to identify program niches for the Centre's work in this area, support exploratory work, and propose options for program priorities and modalities.

105   The task force is still in its early stages but, even so, substantively, three themes are emerging. The first, drawing on the Centre's work with a large policy development project in Egypt, is concerned about policy design and application for supporting the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector. It will also build on the results of a workshop held in Cairo in February 2003 jointly hosted with the Economic Research Forum on this subject. The second, based on the Centre's work on trade and employment, is likely to

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* Titles may have changed since November 2004 or will change.

focus on how developing countries can become more enabled destinations for foreign (direct) investment and remittances while maintaining or improving the economic and social development imperatives. The third, inspired by the Centre's work in the Environment and Natural Resource Management area, will explore the dynamics of being small, competitive and green, and ways to strengthen the private sector's role as an agent of sustainable local development.

106 It is apparent that the Centre will need to work with a set of nontraditional research partners, *inter alia* Southern business schools, chambers of industry and commerce, international consulting firms, private sector-funded foundations and think tanks, small industry associations, productivity councils, and industrial finance institutions. It is expected, then, that the focus on the private sector, while grounded in past work, will develop it in these new directions. Other themes and approaches may well take shape as the work of the task force proceeds.

107 The explicit mention of the topics above is not to exclude the exploration and innovation that constantly occurs within Centre programs, much of which has already been described. Rather, in the spirit of the opening paragraphs of this section, it is to present the broad themes that Centre management feels merit further examination. The examples above also serve to underline that "new idea" does not equal "new program." Development issues have to be separated from the programming modality used to deal with them. The point is that new themes are constantly under consideration. How they evolve within Centre programming is issue-specific.

VI. Partnerships

108 Centre programs will continue to work with other donors and development partners wherever possible. This increases the scope and the impact of Centre programming and contributes to the global coordination and harmonization efforts in development research. At a more practical level, resource mobilization and partnering increases the financial resources for and capacity of our research partners. Partnering, therefore, is a Centre-wide imperative, with every programming unit cognizant of its importance. The Partnership and Business Development Division (PBDD), located in the Program and Partnership Branch, serves as the focal point for the Centre's activities in this area. PBDD takes the lead in the strategic and policy dimensions of partnering, as well as some of the more practical aspects of negotiating and reaching agreement with other donors, roles shared with all program staff.

109 To balance the benefits of partnering with the associated (transactions) costs, in 2003 the Centre moved toward a more deterministic approach to working with other donors. Like-mindedness and program fit are the over-riding considerations for seeking (or receiving overtures from) donor partners. This has lead to a focus on about 24 Canadian, bilateral, multilateral, and foundation partners. It is understood that this list is not definitive. New partners will emerge; others will drop off. During this CS+PF period, maintaining the list — that is, staying on top of developments in other donor agencies and acting on these — will remain a priority for PBDD and the Centre more generally. Strategic partnering frequently includes not only additional funding, but also intellectual inputs and knowledge-sharing, enabling all partners to pool their resources to achieve results they could not attain alone. Resource mobilization thus becomes the outcome rather than the objective of partnering.

110 Under the frame of strategic partnering, three trends bear mention:

- The first is the recognition that capacity building is about more than support for a particular research project (see also section VII below). The Centre's partners in developing countries have expressed an interest in learning more about effective partnering. It is expected that during this CS+PF period PBDD will take the lead in designing and implementing a program for research partners and networks on the various aspects of resource mobilization. Through these activities the program will strengthen institutional capacity and skills of research managers, and ultimately, contribute to the financial sustainability of development research.

- The second trend is the emergence of hitherto recipient countries as donors in their own right. Brazil, China, India, South Africa, and South Korea, for example, have official development assistance programs that will increase in size and sophistication in the coming years. Their contributions to the development research agenda will create opportunities for the Centre both to access resources and to shape the evolution of these programs. The quality of the interaction with these new programs will, initially at least, not be determined by the size of the financial transaction but rather through the innovation of working in a North–South–South modality.

- The third trend is the likely emergence of robust public-private partnerships in the development research sphere. While none is without risk or controversy, a serious effort will be made to understand and work with firms in the information technology,

pharmaceutical, mining, and forestry sectors. A promising start appears to have been made with Microsoft Corporation's Unlimited Potential Program. The ICT4D program area has worked with Microsoft in the development of the telecentre support network, linking this new initiative with the Centre's applied research collaborators.

111   Figure 1 shows the evolution of forecasted and actual cofunding (that is, dollars for Centre activities that flowed through and were managed by the Centre) between 2001/02 and 2004/05. The principal points to note here are:

- The devolution of several mature externally funded initiatives (for example, the Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies secretariat) and of large externally funded initiatives with missions that did not fit entirely well with the Centre's (mainly the Micronutrient Initiative and SchoolNets) have resulted in a drop in the level of annual cofunding.

- The Centre expects to vigorously promote partnering anchored in a firm program base, but will refrain from setting a specific financial target for resource expansion. Nevertheless, it is expected that the approximately $15 million in realized cofunding of the past four years will rise to the $20 million+ range.

- We will aim for a 12% indirect cost recovery rate for new agreements. However, the average realized rate might be lower on account of old agreements at less than 12%, and to allow for the fact that the Centre may elect to reduce a portion of its indirect cost recovery for a given partnership. As a result, the current realized rate of 6% would rise to 9% by 2010. The Centre will aim for 100% direct cost recovery from new contributions during CS+PF 2005–2010.

Figure 1. Total RX cofunding appropriations across IDRC programming 2001–2005
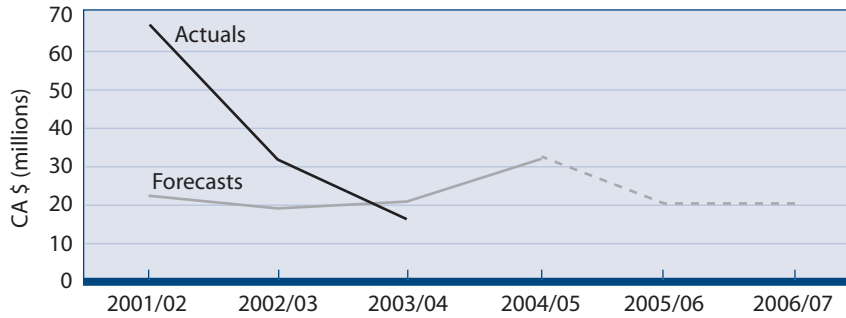
Notes:

Forecast figures: aggregate of probabilities generated by PBDD and team leaders three months prior to the beginning of the FY.
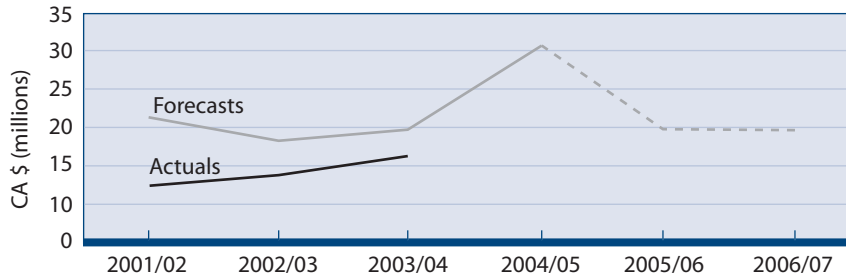
Forecast figures for 2004–05 last revised in September 2004.

Actual figures generated by Epik on 17 May 2004.

Figures include: PIs + secretariats + corporate projects. The Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA) is not included. Only 2004/05 figures include ICA and Connectivity Africa (CA).

Figures exclude the 10% recovery of indirect costs; 2002/03 was the last year Micronutrient Initiative (MI) figures were included.

Figure 1A. Total RX cofunding appropriations across IDRC programming 2001–2005 (without MI)

Notes:

Forecast figures: aggregate of probabilities generated by PBDD and team leaders three months prior to the beginning of the FY.

Forecast figures for 2004/05 last revised in September 2004.

Actual figures generated by Epik on 17 May 2004.

Figures include: PIs + secretariats + corporate projects, ICA is not included. Only 2004/05 figures include ICA and CA.

Figures exclude the 10% recovery of indirect costs.

VII. Programming Modalities

i. Program Initiatives, corporate projects, and explorations

112   The Centre's programs will continue to be delivered via the three existing modalities — Program Initiatives (PIs), secretariats, and corporate projects, with some fusing of the latter two.

113   The PIs will remain unchanged in terms of their concept and structure. They are multi-disciplinary teams, lead by a team leader, organized around a development issue. Typically, team members are located in several IDRC offices. PIs prepare a prospectus that describes the key precepts and operations of the team for a period of five years, a document that is approved by the Board of Governors. The prospectuses form the "rolling" part of the PF. Based on lessons from CSPF 2000–2005 and the external reviews of many PIs, PIs will be larger entities both financially and in terms of human resources during CS+PF 2005–2010. This will be achieved by consolidating existing programs (see the sections on program areas above) and allocating funds from what is assumed to be a growing Parliamentary appropriation and external funding. Larger program units will be more resilient to the inevitable shocks that occur to any system, and permit a larger measure of flexibility in programming lines.

114   The secretariat modality was created in the early 1990s — a period of great financial stress at the Centre — to better enable resource expansion. Secretariats are also organized around a development issue. They are multidonor-funded programs housed within — and therefore governed by — the Centre's structure and processes. Each secretariat is directed by an executive director who manages program and administrative staff, and who reports to the Centre through a steering committee comprising key stakeholders.

115   Corporate projects are large projects (as opposed to a PI, which is a collection of projects), and they are typically more contained than either a PI or secretariat. This modality enables the Centre to pursue a line of work or seize an opportunity without having to create the structures of a PI or secretariat.

116   Until the creation of program areas (and the appointment of their directors) in 2000, these three modalities operated independently. The creation of program areas has brought a significant measure of thematic and managerial coherence to Centre programming. As a result, within each Program Area, PIs, secretariats, and corporate projects function in a much more integrated manner than previously. Examples of cooperation abound, as reported each year in the Program of Work and Budget (PWB), and the Directors of Program Areas' and Regional Directors' Reports. Partnership and resource expansion is inherent in all three modalities, which considerably diminishes one of the *raison d'être* of secretariats. Many of the devolutions of secretariats during CSPF 2000–2005 were driven by considerations of (imperfect) program fit and (high) degree of maturity of the secretariat. Partnering can be achieved whatever the modality. It is assumed that during CS+PF 2005–2010 the financial imperative will not be pre-eminent in entering into an agreement. It is likely, then, that the secretariat modality as currently understood would give way to PIs and corporate projects without in any way diminishing the advantages of multipartnering and joint programming.

117 The Centre will continue to devolve activities where appropriate. Devolution involves the passing of substantive and managerial control of an activity housed within the Centre to an external agency. Historically, the Centre has housed activities within its structure and then devolved them for three reasons:

- an activity may have been "incubated" at the Centre until an appropriate final locale, be it an existing institution or a newly created one, was found;
- the Centre's belief in capacity building, and in not "hanging on" to activities; and
- a hitherto in-house activity will grow, programmatically and in size, to the point where it would be more appropriate to spin it off as an independent entity or to another institution.

118 The Centre has devolved activities throughout its history. Examples include the African Economic Research Consortium, two Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research centres (the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas), the Micronutrient Initiative (MI), and the African Technology Policy Studies network, all of which became independent institutions located (with the exception of MI) in a developing country. We expect to continue in this vein, with individual possibilities being flagged annually in the PWB.

ii. Flexibility in the program system

119 The flexibility built into the annual program maps will be enhanced during CS+PF 2005–2010. Although it is expected that every program will retain some flexibility to seize opportunities when they may arise, there are three explicit windows devoted to this end. The first is the Program Fund that the Policy and Planning Group manages on behalf of the Senior Management Committee to respond to unexpected opportunities to build corporate partnerships and strengthen the Centre's international reputation. The second comes from the Regional Activity Funds that each regional director manages to respond to priorities and opportunities in his or her respective region. The third is the Forward Planning budget item managed by the Program and Partnership Branch. For most of CSPF 2000–2005, these funds amounted to about 12% of the program map: in an era of rising program allocations, that meant an approximate doubling of their dollar value (to $9.3 million in 2004/05) during that period.

120 Governors have consistently endorsed a healthy degree of flexibility within the program system. This flexibility supports:

- rapid entry into emerging opportunities, either geographic or thematic;
- exploratory research activities within the context of the CS+PF;
- corporate priorities (such as linking research to policy);
- funding sabbaticals and internships; and
- providing supplemental funding to strengthen projects or programs or replicate them in other regions.

121 On the assumption that the Centre's Parliamentary appropriation will continue to rise by at least 8% annually during CS+PF 2005–2010, flexibility will be enhanced in two ways. First, program managers will work with individual programs to ensure that pipelines retain the capability to respond to new situations and emerging opportunities.

Second, a larger proportion of the program map will be devoted to the explicit "innovation funds." It is important to note the combination of these two approaches so that internal transactions costs do not increase or that an artificial dichotomy is not created between "regular" programs that might see the funds to support innovations as additional to (and outside of) their own decision-making and priority setting processes.

iii. Trends in Projects

122   Figures 2 and 3 show the evolution in project size by PI and in the aggregate. There is a slight trend toward projects of a larger financial value. Since the initiation of the PI system in 1996, average project size at the Centre has fluctuated around the $300 000 mark and stood at approximately $350 000 in 2003/04. This conceals a marked variance among the PIs, with a few PIs averaging above $400 000 annually and several clustered around the $250 000 mark.

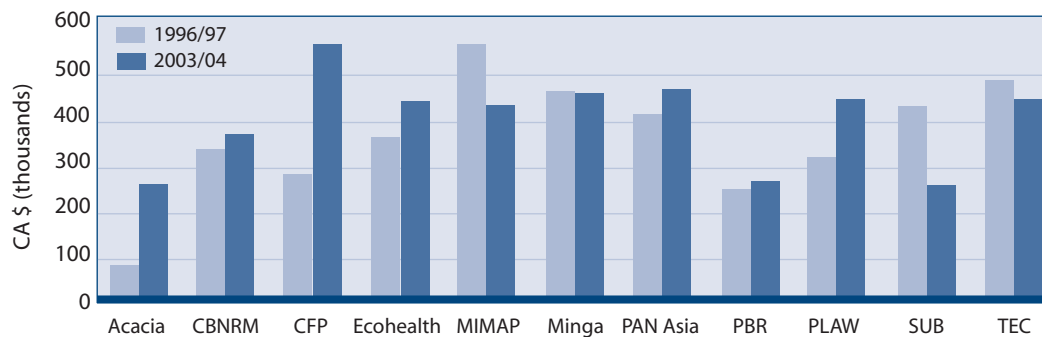**Figure 2.   Annual average project size, 1995–2004**
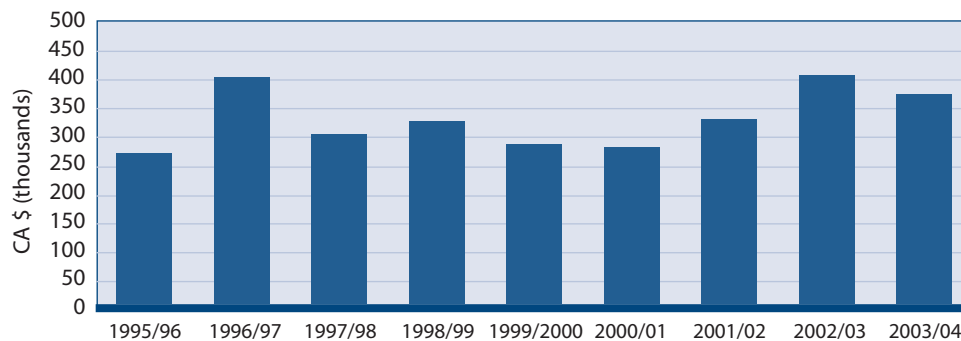
Notes:
Research projects only; internal funding only; all supplements deemed approved at the same time (FY) as original amount.
Programming units included: Acacia, CBNRM, CFP, Ecohealth, MIMAP, Minga, PAN Asia, PBR, PLaW, SUB, TEC.
All non-PI research projects are excluded in this chart (corporate projects, explorations, flex funds, Evaluation, SID).

Figure 3.   Average project size by PI, 1996/97 and 2003/04

Notes:
Research projects only; internal funding only.
All supplements deemed approved at the same time (FY) as original amount.
Some existing projects were assigned once PIs were created.
A retroactive attribution was done of active non-PI projects that fit PI objectives once PIs were created.

123 During CS+PF 2005–2010, the slight upward trend in overall project size will continue, even accelerate. There are a number of reasons for this. First and foremost, throughout CSPF 2000–2005, programming (and therefore projects) was emerging from a period of budgetary cutbacks. Project budgets were therefore concomitantly squeezed. This made for weaker projects and a higher workload. As the Centre's financial situation becomes more buoyant, some of the needless pruning of proposal budgets will end. It is not easy to conceive of a better win–win situation than to mandate projects that are fully and properly funded from the very start.

iv. Centre-wide capacity-building initiatives

124 Equally important, the process of capacity building through research has to be under-stood within the larger context of capacity building — of institutions and of abilities to "do good research" with the capacity to manage funds, partner, communicate, and network. Projects that incorporate these other elements of capacity building will make for a more complete effort — and of necessity be larger in size and scope.

125 The approach to a more complete vision of capacity building will operate through the individual projects supported by the Centre's program units, as well as by Centre-wide initiatives administered by the relevant functional group. During CS+PF 2005–2010, we expect to support initiatives that will operate either globally or regionally in areas such as

- communications;
- linking research to policy;
- partnering and resource expansion;
- electronic access to data and information;
- financial administration.

v. Competitive grants mechanisms, fellowships, and awards

126 A final area where we expect an increased emphasis is in the use of competitive grants mechanisms, and fellowships and awards.

- Competitive grants mechanisms are a useful complement to more capacity-building focused activities (though the two are not mutually exclusive.) Although setting them up is labour-intensive, once established they have the potential to achieve several goals, often simultaneously. Most of these programs have the added advantage of being easily expandable, in size and scope, with relatively few labour inputs (the flip side of having high start-up costs.) This makes partnering possible at various stages of the process. These include:
  - training and capacity building in a new methodology;
  - raising visibility for a niche development issue;
  - network creation;
  - raising visibility for IDRC's work;
  - bringing scholars and practitioners of international calibre into the Centre's orbit;
  - systematizing the process of grants allocation and making it more transparent.

- Fellowships and awards are a subset of the competitive granting modality. At IDRC, these are targeted at young researchers, thus extending the Centre's reach to a group that typically is not covered by "regular" projects, which by their nature are aimed at mid-level and senior researchers and policymakers. A number of PI external reviews pointed to the importance of developing young talent, particularly in emerging fields and methodologies. This process creates the talent pool for other Centre endeavours over time and completes the portion of the Centre's research "lifecycle," which has been relatively neglected for the past decade or so. In addition to expanding the resources available to support Canadian graduate students to carry out fieldwork in developing countries, a program will be (re-)created to support developing-country graduate students to undertake fieldwork and/or study in a Canadian university.